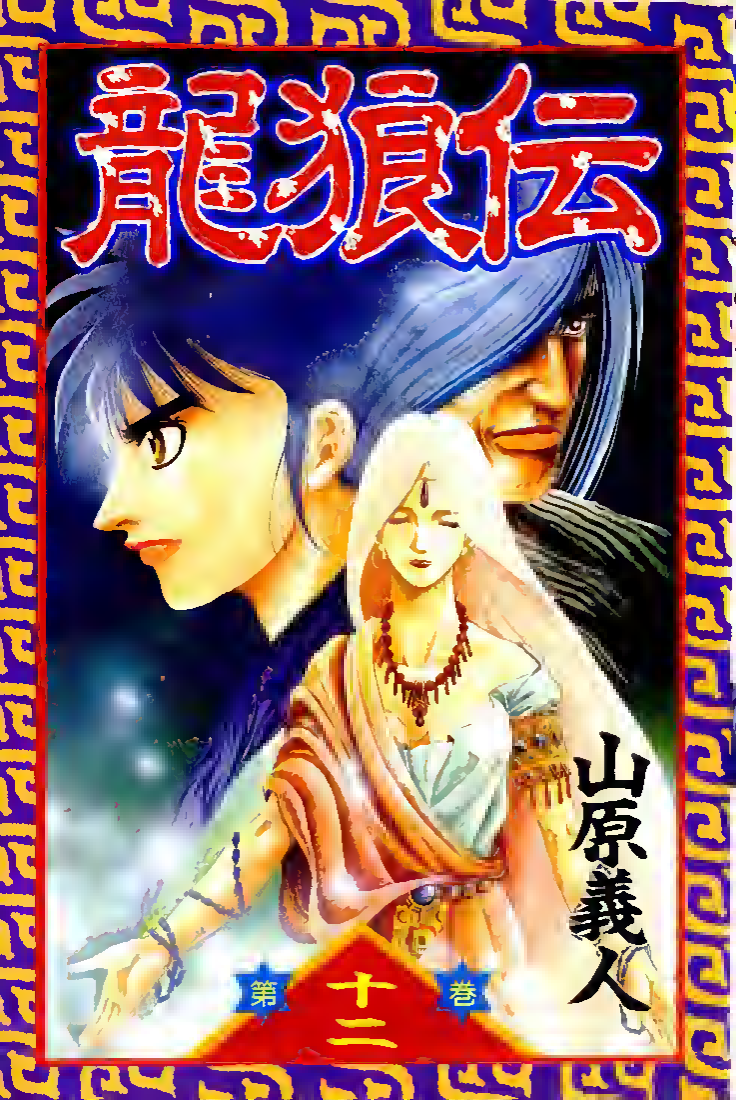

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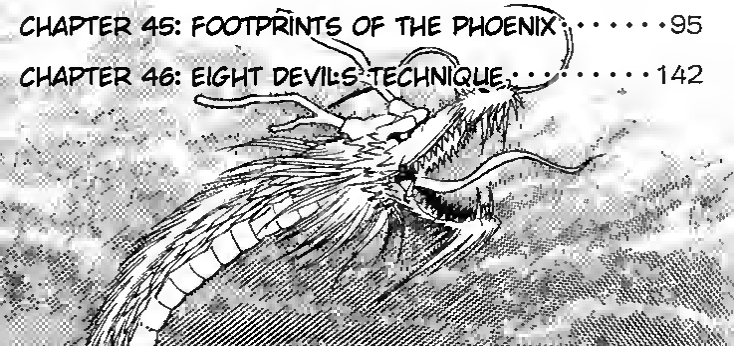


前巻まで——

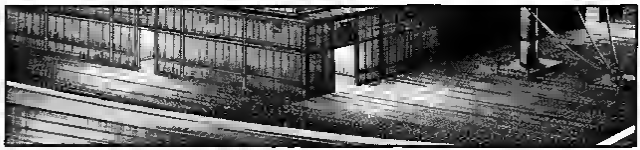
中学生の志狼とまさみは、突如現れた〝竜〟によって現代から〝三国志〟の世界へ連れ去られた。志狼は劉備軍に救われ、〝竜の軍師〟として幕に入り、まさみは謎の男〝仲達〟にさらわれ、曹操に〝竜天女〟として遇されることになった。真澄を救出すべく、曹操軍陣内に潜入した志狼。だが、二人の脱出行を阻止せんと、〝五虎神〟黒獅虎が立ちはだかる。志狼はこれを撃退するが、その際に重傷を負った真澄を呉に連れ帰れば、彼女の命が危ういと判断し、追手の曹軍兵に彼女を預け、敵陣を後にした。

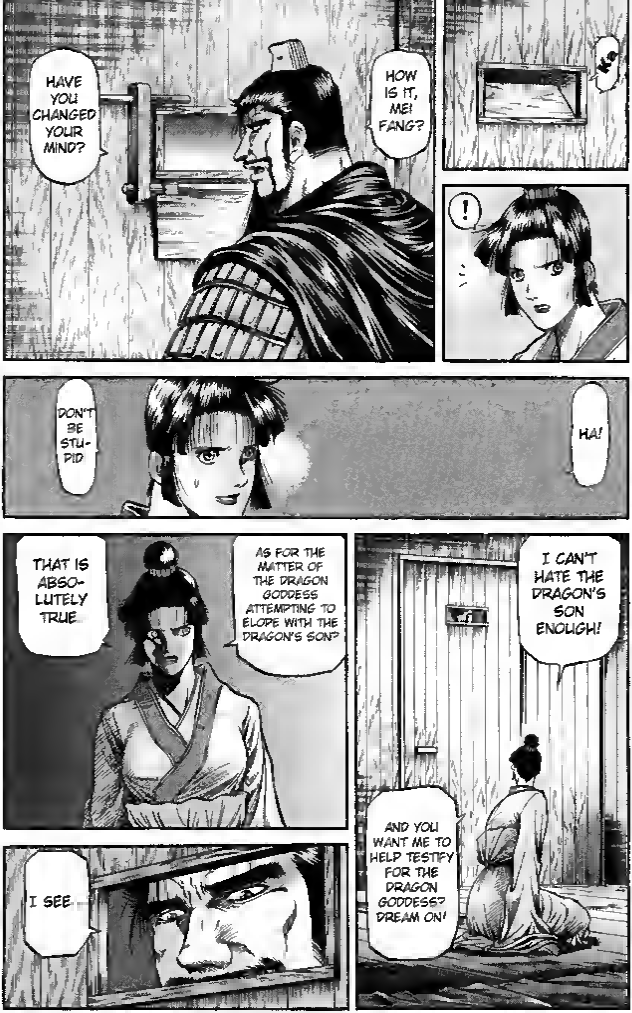
この本には、月刊少年マガジン1997年2月号から5月号にかけて掲載された作品を収録しました。

CHAPTER 43

SECRET ORDERS

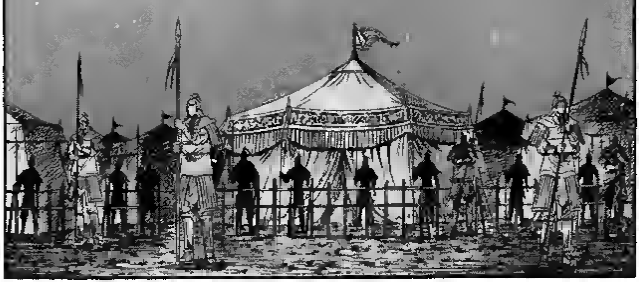
CAO'S
ARMY
CAMP

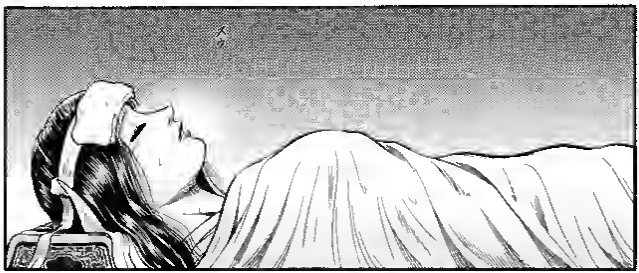



HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR MIND?
HOW IS IT, MEI FANG?
KE-
!
DON'T BE STU-PID
HA!
THAT IS ABSO-LUTELY TRUE
AS FOR THE MATTER OF THE DRAGON GODDESS ATTEMPTING TO ELOPE WITH THE DRAGON'S SON?
I CAN'T HATE THE DRAGON'S SON ENOUGH!
I SEE
AND YOU WANT ME TO HELP TESTIFY FOR THE DRAGON GODDESS? DREAM ON!

YOU ARE ASKING ME?
HOW WOULD I KNOW?
IF THE WOUND AT THE GODDESS'S WAIST IS NOT CAUSED BY YOU, THEN WHO DID IT?
IF THAT'S THE CASE, THEN WHY IS THE GODDESS HURT?
I ONLY KNOW THIS:
ZHEN YUAN WAS MURDERED BY THE DRAGON'S SON!
IF YOU CONTINUE LIKE THIS, YOU'LL REGRET IT
BECAUSE THE MOST IMPORTANT THING FOR US IS TO PROTECT THE GODDESS'S INTEGRITY, IT IS NOT TO KEEP YOU ALIVE
CAN'T BE HELPED
THE FEMALE CREATURE
NO MATTER THE ERA, THEY ALWAYS

I'D RATHER DIE
THAN HELP THE DRAGON'S SON EVER AGAIN!
NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES YOU COME
MY ANSWER'S THE SAME.
I'LL LEAVE THIS TO YOU, BO XIAN
NG!
THAT SERVANT GIRL IS THE ONLY WITNESS TO THIS FIASCO RIGHT NOW, WE CAN'T LET THE OTHER SOLDIERS KNOW ABOUT THE MATTER
NG, I UNDERSTAND
I'LL NOT LET ANYONE NEAR THIS SHIP





THE WOUND IS AT PRESENT NO MORE A WORRY,
MORE-OVER, THE FEVER'S ABATED,
AND IN HER CONDITION, SHE'LL BE UP AND ABOUT IN TEN DAYS OR SO.
IT SEEMS
THAT SHE'LL SURVIVE.

THE DRAGON GODDESS IS THE DRAGON-INCARNATE, HOW CAN SHE DIE!
THAT'S TO BE EXPECTED!

フフ……

PRIME MINISTER.
!

THAT'S TO BE EXPECTED!

NG!?

DIDN'T YOU SAY YOU WANT TO FOLLOW ME INTO BATTLE?
DRA-GON GOD-DESS?

IF YOU CAN PROMISE WITH YOUR LIFE TH T YOU'LL NEVER BETRAY MY TRUST.
ALL RIGHT! I'LL BELIEVE YOU.
I'M ON YOUR SIDE, PRIME MINISTER.
NG!
HNG
WHAT SMOOTH WORDS ...!
"I'M ON YOUR SIDE, PRIME MINISTER"

TO HAVE YOUR HEAD REMOVED FROM YOUR SHOULDERS, DR. SON GODDESS.
RIGHT NOW, I SHOULD HAVE MADE THE CLEAR DECISION

SHE IS STILL OBSTINATELY REFUSING TO COOPERATE.
YES ...

HOW DID IT GO WITH THE SERVANT GIRL?
AND?

I'M AFRAID IT MIGHT BE MANY DAYS BEFORE SHE CALMS DOWN
SHE ONLY DESIRES TO AVENGE HER LOVE'S DEATH

DO NOT DISAPPEAR THAT EASILY.
FOR WOMEN, DESIRE FOR THEIR LOVED ONES
DO YOU REALLY THINK SO, ZHANG LIAO?
NOT CONSIDERING WORLD MATTERS, BATTLE SITUATIONS, AND SUCH ISSUES,
EVEN WHEN CRADLED IN THE BOSOM OF POWER AND POSITION, SHE CAN STILL GIVE ALL THAT UP TO CHASE AFTER HER LOVE.
. . . .
IS REALLY STUPID BEYOND BELIEF.
THE CREATURE KNOWN AS WOMAN

THAT SERVANT GIRL...
SHE'LL BECOME TROUBLE FOR US IF WE LET HER BE
WITHOUT ALLOWING A SINGLE SOUL TO KNOW,
GET RID OF HER!
IT'S ALREADY COMMON KNOWLEDGE AMONG THE SOLDIERS
THAT THE DRAGON GODDESS AND THE DRAGON ADVISOR USED TO BE TOGETHER
WE MUST NOT LET THE SOLDIERS' TRUST IN THE DRAGON GODDESS DIMINISH DURING OUR PREPARATIONS TO BATTLE AGAINST WU
IF THIS FIASCO WITH THE GODDESS LEAKS OUT, THAT SHE'S SECRETLY MEETING THE DRAGON ADVISOR, OUR TROOP'S MORALE WILL SUFFER GREATLY

THE COMMON SOLDIERS WILL BELIEVE THAT THIS BATTLE HAS BEEN FORSAKEN BY HEAVEN, AND WILL BE FILLED WITH GREAT FEAR
OUR ARMY'S "GUARDIAN DEITY", THE DRAGON GODDESS, COLLUDING WITH THE ENEMY, IS AN EXTREMELY EVIL OMEN
陸平雲而

WE MIGHT SUFFER DEFEAT EVEN IN THE FACE OF A WINNABLE BATTLE
IF WE ATTEMPT TO BATTLE IN THAT CONDITION

AT LEAST NOT UNTIL THIS BATTLE WITH WU HAS CONCLUDED!
THE DRAGON GODDESS CANNOT BE A TWO-FACED PERSON TO THE SOLDIERS,

PUT THIS OUT INSTEAD: THE DRAGON GODDESS WAS WOUNDED BECAUSE SHE REFUSED WU'S INVITATION TO THE DESERT AND WAS THEN ATTACKED BY ENEMY SOLDIERS
PUT A TIGHT SEAL ON THE MATTER OF THE DRAGON GODDESS SECRETLY MEETING THE DRAGON ADVISOR.
!

THEN IT WOULD BE OK TO DISH OUT SOME PUNISH-MENT
IF THIS STILL CAN'T TAME THOSE BLUB-BERING TONGUES

HNG!

NO WONDER ZHANG LIAO WAS NOT LOOKING AFTER HIMSELF — SO THAT IS WHAT HAPPENED
SO THAT'S IT...

GOT IT.

OF COURSE
THE REASON GODDESS WANTED TO FOLLOW INTO BATTLE IS BECAUSE SHE WANTED TO ESCAPE WITH THE DRAGON ADVISOR
JUST LIKE YOU SAID TO THE PRIME MINISTER IN THE BEGINNING,
JUST BECAUSE SHE MANAGED TO CONJURE THE DRAGON ONCE, WE SHOW REVERENCE TOWARDS THIS UNKNOWN LITTLE GIRL WHO WE SHOULD'VE NEVER TREATED SO WELL.
ANYONE CAN SEE THAT THE GODDESS IS NOT TO BE TRUSTED.
I KNOW WHAT NEEDS DONE, EVEN WITHOUT YOUR REMINDERS
BUT CONSIDERING THE PRIME MINISTER'S LAST STATEMENT, IT SEEMS THE DRAGON GODDESS'S LIFE CAN ONLY BE GUARANTEED UNTIL THIS BATTLE'S END
HE WOULDN'T HAVE TO SUFFER THIS TROUBLE
IF THE PRIME MINISTER HAD HEEDED MY WORDS MORE CLOSELY
WE SHOULD NOW BE DOING OUR ADVISORY DUTY AND COME UP WITH A WINNING BATTLE STRATEGY
THE MATTER'S PASSED ANYHOW,

THE PRIME MINISTER CAN NO LONGER BE CONSIDERED "WORTHY" OF THE WORLD.
IN OTHER WORDS,
. . . . .
COULD IT BE THAT HIS HEART IS STILL WRESTLING WITH DOUBTS CAUSED BY THE GODDESS'S FIASCO?
NO! FROM THE ONE OTHERS REFER TO AS THE "SCOUNDREL LEADER" THAT SEEMED SOMEWHAT RESERVED
KEEPING THE SOLDIER'S BATTLE CONDITION IN MIND,
THE PRIME MINISTER'S REACTION TOWARDS THE GODDESS'S ACTIONS CAN BE CONSIDERED WELL THOUGHT OUT.

THE PURE MOON...
NG...

AS THE MOON, THEN WE WOULD NOT HAVE WARS.
IF PEOPLE'S HEARTS WERE AS PURE AND INNOCENT

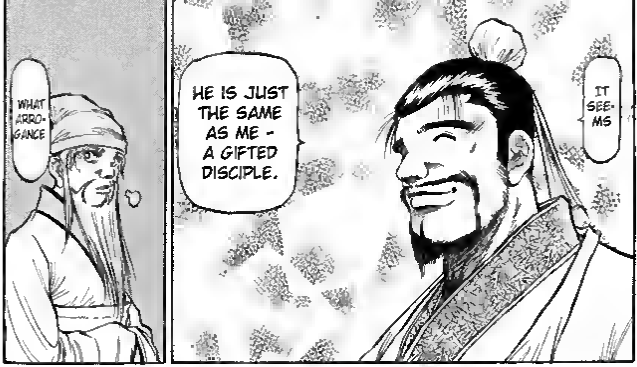
EVEN AN INNOCENT HEART MIGHT BECOME POLLUTED BY THE TUHUL-TUOLIS ERA.
HOWEVER...

MASTER ZHUO CI.

THAT'S RIGHT.

IT SEEMS
THE DRAGON GODDESS HAS ALREADY BEEN TAKEN CARE OF.
YES
THIS IS ALL DUE TO MASTER'S FORESIGHT.
FOLLOWING YOUR WORDS IF I HAD BEEN LATE ARRIVING AT THE BLACK FOREST...
IT'LL BE TOO LATE TO SAVE THE GODDESS, RIGHT?
IF THAT HAD BEEN SO
I'D HAVE HAD TO SUFFER THE HATE OF THE SOLDIERS WHO WANTED TO PROTECT HER
I'M PARTLY TO BLAME TOO.
IF I'D ARRIVED IN THE BLACK FOREST EARLIER, THE DRAGON GODDESS MAY HAVE BEEN KEPT FROM HARM.
EVEN SO, YOU'RE TRULY MY STUDENT WHO WAS SCHOOLED IN THE DIVINE-HEALING ARTS
YOUR SKILLS ARE EXTRAORDINARY.
.....

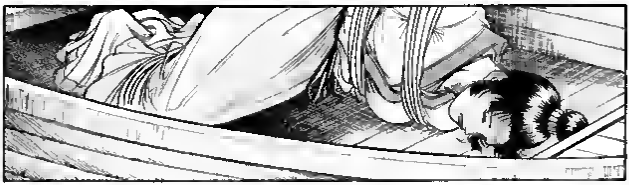
!
IT WAS THE DRAGON'S SON...
IN REALITY, THE ONE WHO SAVED THE DRAGON GODDESS ISN'T ME
I THOUGHT TO MYSELF, EVEN BEFORE I'D FINISHED BANDAGING HER UP, THAT SHE WOULD DIE FROM EXCESSIVE LOSS OF BLOOD
IN TRUTH, WHEN I SAW THE GODDESS'S WOUND
HER HEART WAS NOT WEAKENING, BUT LIKE AN ANIMAL IN HIBERNATION, ITS REGULAR BEATING SLOWED.
THE REASON WAS THAT HER HEART WAS BEATING AT HALF NORMAL PACE
ONLY ONE WHO CAN USE THE "WIND AND CLOUD" TECHNIQUE, LIKE THE DRAGON'S SON, COULD HAVE PULLED IT OFF...
BUT THE FUNNY THING IS WHILE I WAS TENDING TO HER WOUND,
HER BLOOD LOSS WAS FAR LESS SEVERE THAN WHAT I HAD EXPECTED


WHAT ARRO-GANCE
HE IS JUST THE SAME AS ME - A GIFTED DISCIPLE.
IT SEE-MS

CAN'T BE HEL-PED!
WHO'D BELIEVE THIS IS MY DESTINY?

IS MASTER OFF SOME-WHERE POKING HIS NOSE INTO OTHERS BUSINESS AGAIN?

ALL RIGHT. IT'S ABOUT TIME I TAKE MY LEAVE



GENERAL ZHANG LIAO, IS IT OK TO NOT KILL HER FIRST?

A PITIFUL WOMAN

AND SHE'S TO BE EXECUTED IN THIS GOD-FORSAKEN PLACE
THAT'S RIGHT TOO, BECAUSE THIS WOMAN IS GOING DOWN ON THE CHARGE OF BEING A WU SPY,

I JUST CAN'T FORCE MYSELF TO
RIGHT THERE'S NO NEED

I REALLY DON'T WANT TO HAVE TO EXECUTE HER
IT'S JUST

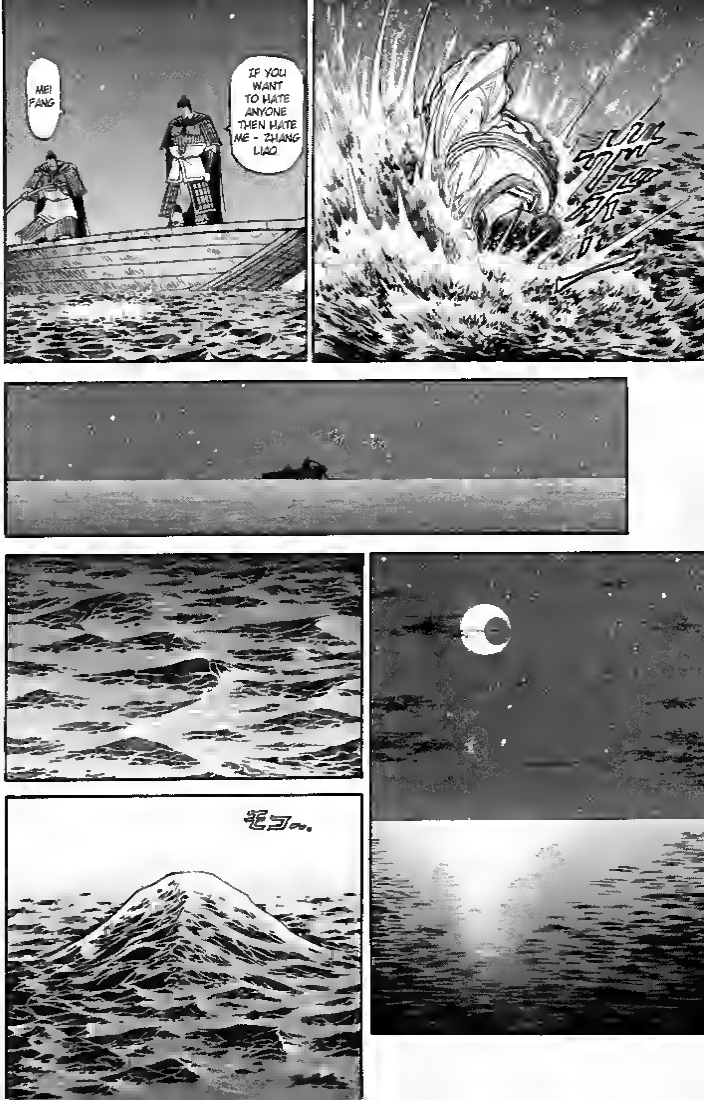
THEY MIGHT SUSPECT THAT WE ARE TRYING TO SILENCE HER, AND THEY WOULD END UP DISTRUSTING THE GODDESS EVEN MORE
IT CAN'T BE HELPED IF THE SOLDIERS KNEW WE EXECUTED THE SERVANT GIRL

SO YOU THOUGHT YOU COULD, KNOWING THE CIRCUMSTANCES, COME UP WITH A SCHEME WHERE YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO KILL, BUT...
THIS MAID WAS FOUND AND IMMEDIATELY HIDDEN FROM PUBLIC VIEW.

BO XIAN.
IT MUST BE HARD ON YOU

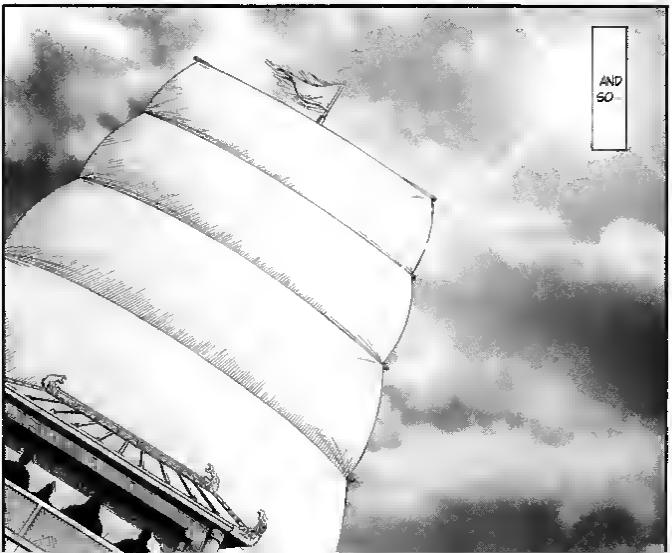
IF IT HADN'T BEEN GENERAL ZHANG LIAO'S ORDERS. I, BO XIAN, WOULD NEVER HAVE DONE THIS
SAME WITH ME

I'M SURE TO FOLLOW NO MATTER WHERE THE GENERAL GOES
BUT BECAUSE I'M INDEBTED TO THE GENERAL FROM WAY WHEN I WAS A NOBODY,


MEI FANG
IF YOU WANT TO HATE ANYONE THEN HATE ME - ZHANG LIAO

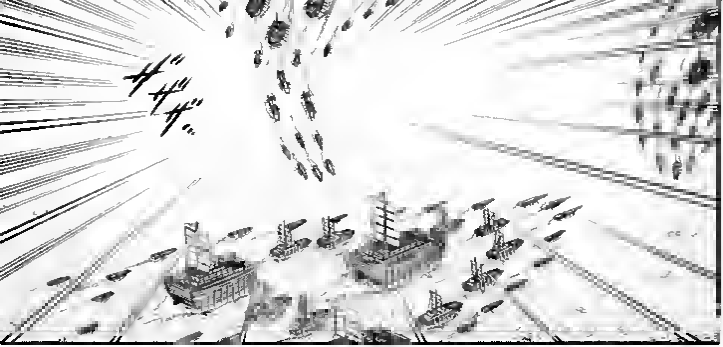
BUT THIS LADY USED TO HAVE A PURE HEART,
AND I REALLY CANNOT STAND BY AND NOT DO ANYTHING.
MY SPRING
IF ANYONE IS TO CALL ME A BUSYBODY, I'LL HAVE NOTHING TO SAY,

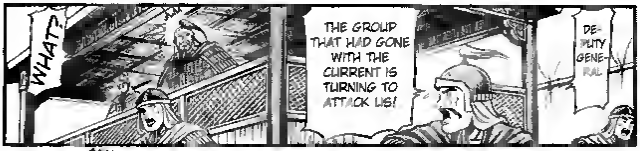
HAS NO IDEA JUST HOW MUCH THIS SERVANT GIRL'S LIFE IS GOING TO AFFECT THIS TUMULTUOUS ERA
RIGHT AT THIS MOMENT, EVEN THE FARSIGHTED DIVINE ZHUO CI

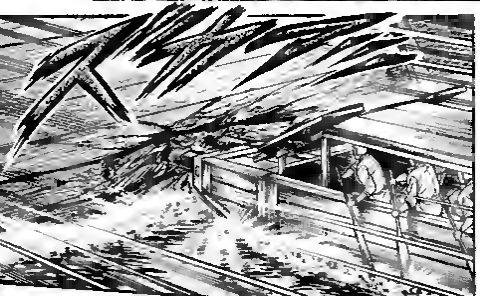

AND SO...

THE BATTLE BETWEEN WU'S AND CAO CAO'S ARMIES
IS GOING TO START AGAIN WITH A BANG!
H...
PAY BACK OUR PAST SHAME MANY TIMES OVER UPON THESE WU BARBARIANS!
FOR-WARD!
EX-CEL-LENT!
INITIATE THE LEFT-RIGHT SPLIT!
XING PROVINCE NAVY DEPUTY GENERAL ZHANG YUN

!
IF THAT'S THE CASE, THEN WE'LL RETALIATE BY ATTACKING FULL FORCE ON THAT GROUP OF THEIRS THAT HAS STEERED INTO THE CURRENT!
DAMN THEM! ARE THEY THINKING TO SPLIT US UP INTO TWO GROUPS TOO?
THE ENEMY IS SPLITTING INTO TWO GROUPS.
DEPUTY GENERAL ZHANG YUN.
IT'S A PITY AS THAT TACTIC IS ONLY VIABLE WHEN YOUR FLEET IS MOVING FASTER THAN THE OTHER FLEET.
HNG! TRYING TO USE OUR PAST TACTIC AGAINST US?
ATTACK!



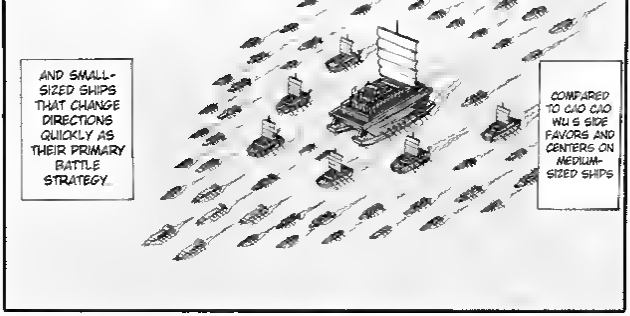

WHAT?
THE GROUP THAT HAD GONE WITH THE CURRENT IS TURNING TO ATTACK US!
DEPUTY GENERAL



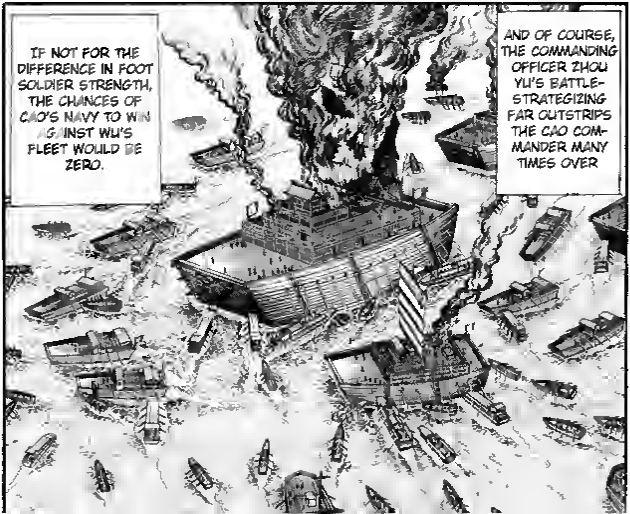
WE ARE GOING UPSTREAM AS WELL, HOW DID THEY MANAGE TO CHASE US DOWN SO QUICKLY?
IMPOSSIBLE! THEY'RE GOING TOO FAST!

WAAH!
ENE-MY IN THE FOR-CE!
DE-PUTY GENE-RAL!
CAN'T BELIEVE WE'VE BEEN BOARDED SO EASILY!
D(-MN!
A PINCER ATTACK, DON'T LET ANY ONE OF THEM ESCAPE ALIVE!
AT-TACK!

WOULD HAVE SUCH A HUGE IMPACT ON THE BATTLE.
DIDN'T THINK THE DIFFERENCE IN OUR FLEETS
WU WU WU...
IS IN THEIR PICK-UP SPEEDS.
THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CAO CAO'S AND WU'S FLEETS
AND SO THEIR BATTLE STRATEGY CENTERS AROUND THEIR LARGE SHIPS.
BECAUSE CAO CAO IS ATTACKING WITH A 200,000-STRONG FORCE, LARGER SHIPS ARE NEEDED TO TRANSPORT THEM.


AND SMALL-SIZED SHIPS THAT CHANGE DIRECTIONS QUICKLY AS THEIR PRIMARY BATTLE STRATEGY.
COMPARED TO CAO CAO WU'S SIDE FAVORS AND CENTERS ON MEDIUM-SIZED SHIPS

FURTHERMORE, WU'S SHIPS' BUILD AND THE ABILITY OF THE SOLDIERS TO CONTROL THE SHIPS ARE FAR ABOVE THAT OF CAO'S
SO, BETWEEN THE WU AND CAO FLEETS, THE FATAL DIFFERENCE LIES IN THEIR MANEUVERING SPEEDS.


IF NOT FOR THE DIFFERENCE IN FOOT SOLDIER STRENGTH, THE CHANCES OF CAO'S NAVY TO WIN AGAINST WU'S FLEET WOULD BE ZERO.
AND OF COURSE, THE COMMANDING OFFICER ZHOU YU'S BATTLE-STRATEGIZING FAR OUTSTRIPS THE CAO COMMANDER MANY TIMES OVER

ZHOU YU, YOU'RE TOO DESPICABLE!
DAMN YOU!

WU

THE ENEMY FLEET IS ESCAPING.
COMMANDER ZHOU

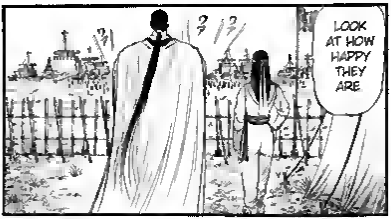
SO I'M ONLY WASTING MY EFFORTS NO MATTER HOW MANY OF THESE SMALL BATTLES WE MAY WIN
CAO CAO IS NOT COMING INTO BATTLE HIMSELF

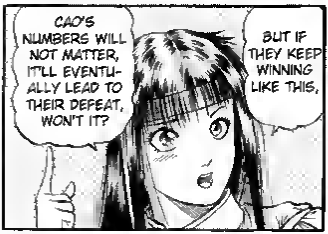
THERE'S NO NEED FOR A PURSUIT
LEAVE THEM

THE TRUE END OF THE BATTLE IS STILL FAR BEYOND SIGHT.
CONSIDERING TROOP STRENGTH, CAO'S ARMY IS OBVIOUSLY AND FRIGHTENINGLY LARGE.
NO MATTER HOW POWERFUL THEY MAY BE, THEY ARE NO MATCH FOR US!
WE'VE DEFEATED CAO'S ARMY AGAIN!
WU'S ARMY CAMP

THEY'D FLEE AT THE SIGHT OF US FROM AFAR!
THAT CAO ARMY, THEY'RE NOTHING!

WU'S NAVY IS POWERFUL, THERE'S NO DENYING IT.
EVEN SO


LOOK AT HOW HAPPY THEY ARE

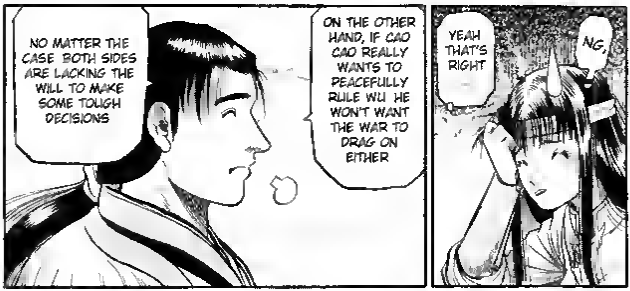

CAO'S NUMBERS WILL NOT MATTER, IT'LL EVENTUALLY LEAD TO THEIR DEFEAT, WON'T IT?
BUT IF THEY KEEP WINNING LIKE THIS,

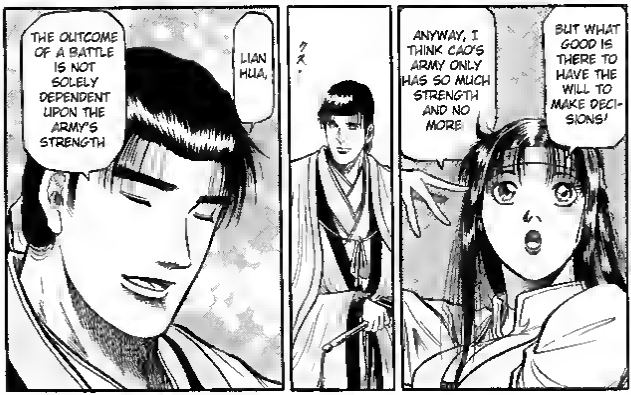
NG

ON TROOP STRENGTH, WE'RE STILL WAY BELOW THEM
HOWEVER,

CAO CAO IS NOT THE KIND OF COMMANDER WHO'D WANT TO SUFFER ONE DEFEAT AFTER ANOTHER.
LIAN HUA,

AND ZHOU YU IS FULLY AWARE OF THIS POINT AS WELL.
IF THE WAR DRAGS ON, IT WON'T BE ANY BETTER FOR THE WEAKER WU EITHER


NO MATTER THE CASE BOTH SIDES ARE LACKING THE WILL TO MAKE SOME TOUGH DECISIONS
ON THE OTHER HAND, IF CAO CAO REALLY WANTS TO PEACEFULLY RULE WU HE WON'T WANT THE WAR TO DRAG ON EITHER
NG,
YEAH THAT'S RIGHT

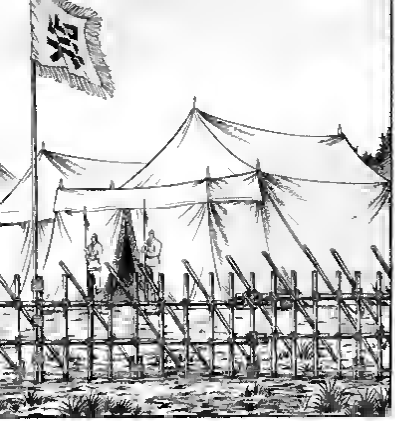

THE OUTCOME OF A BATTLE IS NOT SOLELY DEPENDENT UPON THE ARMY'S STRENGTH
LIAN HUA,
ANYWAY, I THINK CAO'S ARMY ONLY HAS SO MUCH STRENGTH AND NO MORE
BUT WHAT GOOD IS THERE TO HAVE THE WILL TO MAKE DECISIONS!

IT IS POSSIBLE THAT ONE CAN FACE A MILLION OPPONENTS AND WIN AGAINST A MILLION OPPONENTS.
TIME IS A PERSON'S STRENGTH.
WHAT ARE YOU ON ABOUT?
JUST ONE PERSON...
YES ...
.....
IS THE DRAGON'S SON STILL THE SAME?
OH YES!

EVER SINCE HIS RETURN FROM THE ENEMY CAMP THAT NIGHT, HE'S BEEN LIKE THAT...
はあ
はあ

NO!
STILL NOT ENOUGH!
IF I REALLY HAVE
AN UNBEATABLE "POWER"...!
NOT EVEN THE "FIVE TIGER GENERALS" WOULD BE ANY TROUBLE
NOT EVEN CHUNG TA EITHER...
IF I HAD BEEN STRONGER
I'D HAVE SUCCEEDED IN SAVING MASUM!

WHO'S THERE?
SFX SHOCKED
LIAN HUA
AH...
COMMANDER ZHOU YU IS LOOKING FOR ME?
DIDN'T I SAY I WANT TO BE ALONE FOR A WHILE?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
IT'S JUST THAT COMMANDER ZHOU IS LOOKING FOR YOU, SO
I'M, I'M SORRY

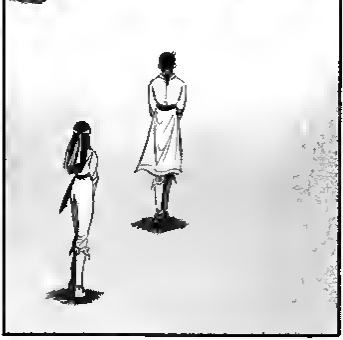

HANDSOME ZHOU LOOKING FOR THE DRAGON'S SON?
?

BUT YOU SHOULD ATTEND WAR MEETINGS ONCE IN A WHILE TOO
IT'S GOOD YOU'RE PRACTICING HARD,

DRAGON ADVISOR
IT'S BEEN A WHILE PLEASED TO MEET YOU AGAIN,

?

YES



I'VE ALREADY HEARD FROM MR. KONG MING ABOUT YOUR ATTEMPT TO RETRIEVE THE DRAGON GODDESS
I CAN ALSO UNDERSTAND THE FRUSTRATION YOU FEEL.
INFILTRATING THE ENEMY'S WELL-GUARDED CAMP TO RETRIEVE SOMEONE,
THAT TRULY IS THE BEST STRATEGY TO SAVE THE DRAGON GODDESS
HOWEVER, NOT INFORMING ME, THE COMMANDING OFFICER, OF YOUR MOVE,
THAT'S JUST NOT RIGHT. DO BEAR THIS POINT IN MIND IN THE FUTURE.
YES
PLEASE FORGIVE ME, COMMANDER.

FOR-GET IT!
HA!
HE'D EVEN DO THIS!
HNG! THAT STUPID DRAG-ON'S SON!
AND SO WE DON'T NEED THE DRAGON'S SON'S GLORY.
IN THE PRESENT NAVY BATTLE, OUR FLEET HAS THE UPPER HAND
. . . .
WE STILL CAN'T BEAT CAO'S ARMY. WHAT DO YOU THINK, DRAGON ADVISOR?
HOWEVER, EVEN IF WE KEEP WINNING THESE SMALL BATTLES,

WE CANNOT BEAT AN ENEMY THAT FAR OUTNUMBERS US, IF WE WERE TO DO A FRONTAL ATTACK...
BECAUSE OF THIS, MR. KONG MING AND I HAVE COME UP WITH A PLAN.
WE WISH TO SEND A SPY INTO THE ENEMY CAMP,
TO MOVE AND COORDINATE FROM WITHIN, SO AS TO TURN THE SITUATION TO OUR FAVOR. ONLY THEN WILL WU HAVE A WINNING CHANCE, ISN'T IT RIGHT?
THERE'S ONLY ONE PERSON WHO HAS THE ABILITY TO CARRY THIS "SPYING" RESPONSIBILITY
AND HE IS THE "PHOENIX" OF SHANG YANG, LONG SHI YUEN.

REFERRING TO THAT MINISTER LONG?
SURELY HE'S NOT
!!
AND HE'S WISER THAN ME IN BATTLE TACTICS, AND STRATEGIZING.
SHI YUEN AND I ARE OLD FRIENDS
KOU-MEI-SENSEI—
FOR BEARING SUCH COVERT SPYING RESPONSIBILITY, THERE IS NONE MORE SUITABLE.
IF THE WIDELY KNOWN SHI YUEN WERE TO VISIT THEM, CAO CAO WOULD NO DOUBT HAPPILY WELCOME HIM AS AN HONORED GUEST.
THERE IS ONE PROBLEM.
BUT.
!

SHI YUEN HAD GONE INTO HIDING TO PROTECT HIS FAMILY FROM BEING ATTACKED BY THE CAO ARMY.
AND HE HAS YET TO BE FOUND.
THEREFORE
THIS MATTER REQUIRES YOUR HELP AS THE "DRAGON'S SON"
WE HOPE YOU WOULD USE YOUR "DRAGON POWER"
AND HELP US SEARCH OUT THIS MISSING PHOENIX.
CHAPTER 43 END

HEY GUYS.

A SPECIAL THANKS TO THE GUYS IN #TRANSLATORS FOR THE HELP IN SOME MISSING TRANSLATION OF THIS CHAPTER. WELL, JANKENPON'S STILL SEARCHING FOR STAR OCEAN TRANSLATORS SO EMAIL US IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN HELPING OUT. SEE YA ALL AROUND!

JOIN@JANKENPON.DE

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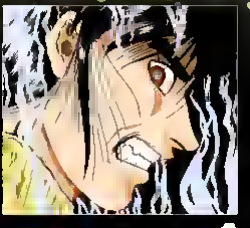
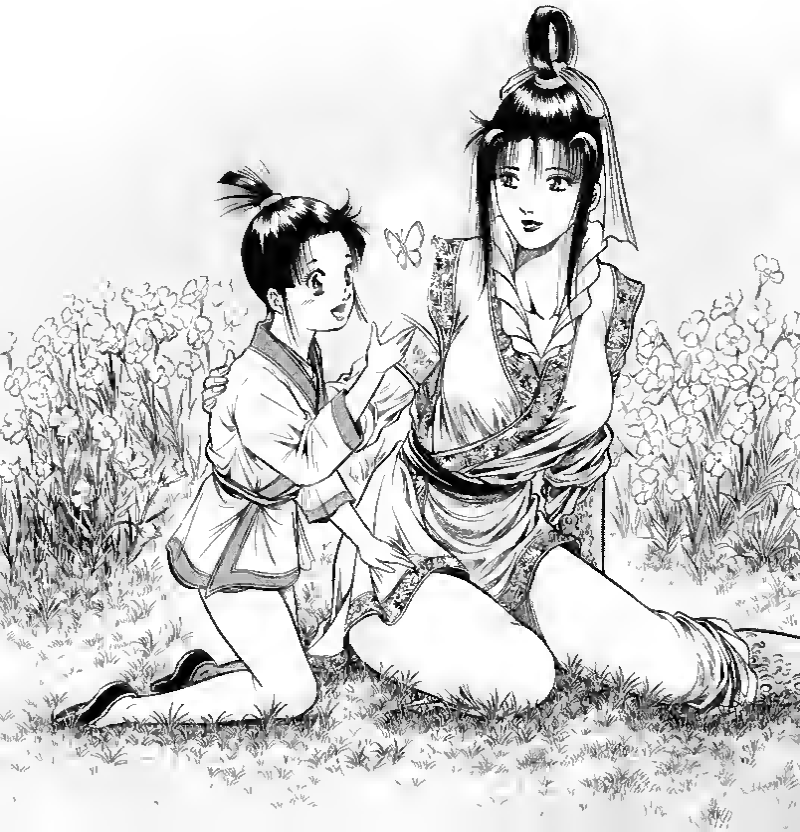
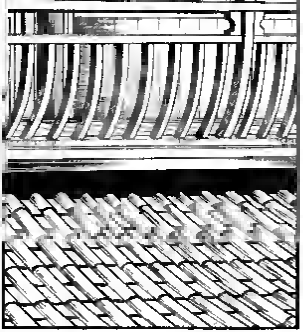


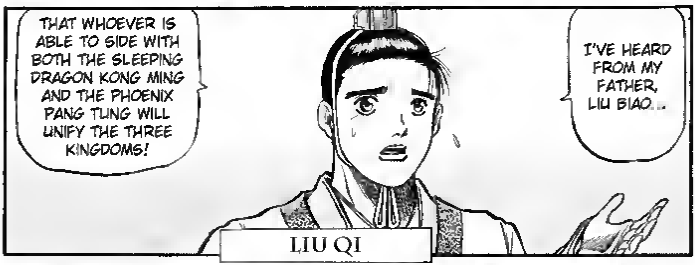
CHAPTER 44
AN UNWELCOME GUEST





NOTE: BASED ON HISTORICAL FACTS, SUN [illegible] SMARTER THAN PANG TONG.

SHOULD HE BECOME OUR SPY AND ENTER CAO CAO'S BASE AS A MOLE, THINGS WOULD BE MUCH EASIER FOR WU!
THEN ONE CAN UNDERSTAND WHY ADMIRAL ZHOU YU WOULD WANT HIM TO SIDE WITH US.


THAT WHOEVER IS ABLE TO SIDE WITH BOTH THE SLEEPING DRAGON KONG MING AND THE PHOENIX PANG TUNG WILL UNIFY THE THREE KINGDOMS!
I'VE HEARD FROM MY FATHER, LIU BIAO...
LIU QI

MAYBE SHIRO NEEDS IT AFTER ALL
HMM...
SUCH A MAN IS NOWHERE TO BE FOUND...
I DON'T KNOW WHY...
RIGHT AWAY... AND TO FIND A GHOST OF ALL THINGS... WHAT IS WU THINKING?
SHIRO HAD A HARD TIME AFTER HE GOT BACK TO XIA KOU, HAVING HIM SET OFF

THE STATE OF EMPTINESS HE WAS IN WHEN HE GOT BACK...
WAS TOTALLY UNBELIEVABLE. THERE WASN'T ANY TRACE OF LIFE LEFT IN HIM

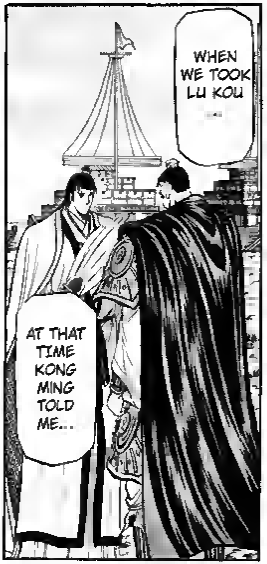
HE'S SUFFERED A TERRIBLE SHOCK AFTER THE FAILED RESCUE MISSION...
SO I THINK HE SHOULD TAKE SOME TIME OFF THE BATTLEFIELD AND REST.

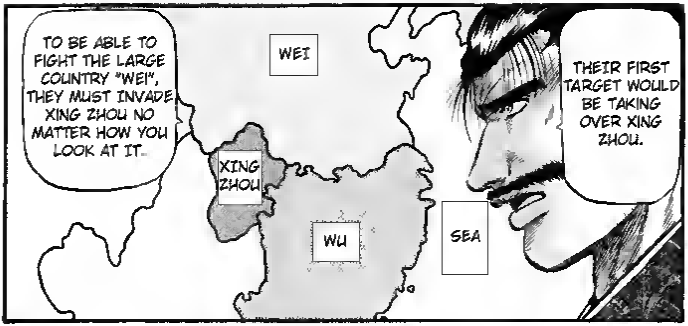
HMPH!
IF I'D KNOWN, I'D HAVE GONE WITH HIM AND GAVE IT A QUICK FIX!
CAO CAO'S ARMY OR NOT, I COULD WASTE THEM IN NO TIME AND GRAB THE DRAGON GODDESS BACK.
WHAT'S THE POINT OF GOING IN STEALTH MODE IF YOU DO THAT?!
AH! NOT ME
BUT!
I'M WORRIED ABOUT ZHOU YU'S MOTIVES.

ASKING LADY YUE YING TO SEARCH FOR PANG TUNG IS DEFINITELY WISE ..
BUT WHAT'S THE POINT OF ASKING THE DRAGON ADVISOR TO SEARCH FOR HIM AS WELL?

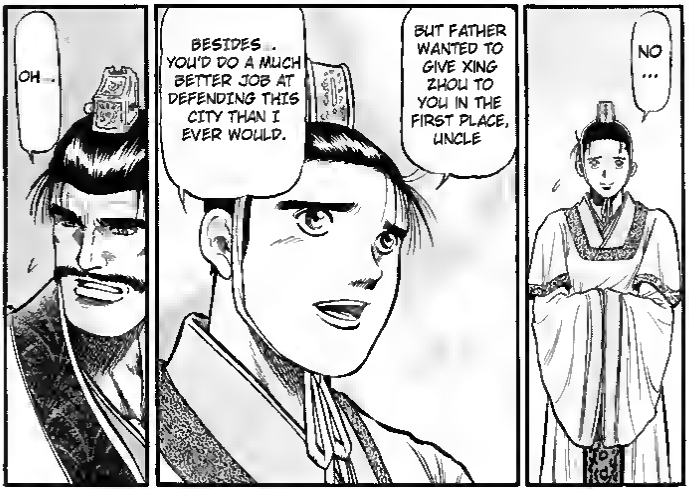
HE WANTS SHIRO TO USE HIS "DRAGON POWER" TO SEARCH ..
I CAN'T HELP BUT FEEL THAT IT'S NOTHING MORE THAN RUBBISH REASONING.

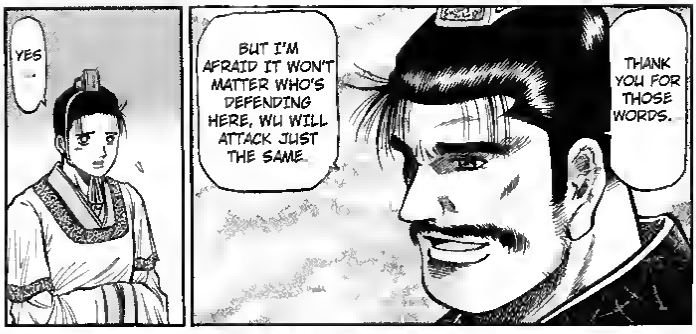
THAT WE'D BE NEXT ON WU'S PLANS...
IT SEEMS THAT WE'RE THE NEXT ENEMY AS FAR AS THEY'RE CONCERNED!


WHEN WE TOOK LU KOU ...
AT THAT TIME KONG MING TOLD ME...


TO BE ABLE TO FIGHT THE LARGE COUNTRY "WEI", THEY MUST INVADE XING ZHOU NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOK AT IT.
WEI
XING ZHOU
WU
SEA
THEIR FIRST TARGET WOULD BE TAKING OVER XING ZHOU.

AND AS WU IS VERY WELL AWARE OF, WE'RE NOT ABOUT TO JUST SIT ON THE FENCE AND DO NOTHING, ARE WE?
HOWEVER, RIGHT NOW, MY NEPHEW LIU QI, YOU ARE THE LEGITIMATE LORD OF XING ZHOU.


OH...
BESIDES, YOU'D DO A MUCH BETTER JOB AT DEFENDING THIS CITY THAN I EVER WOULD.
BUT FATHER WANTED TO GIVE XING ZHOU TO YOU IN THE FIRST PLACE, UNCLE
NO...


YES ...
BUT I'M AFRAID IT WON'T MATTER WHO'S DEFENDING HERE, WU WILL ATTACK JUST THE SAME.
THANK YOU FOR THOSE WORDS.

KONG MING SAYS THAT THIS IS NOTHING BUT A PLOT TO LET OUR TROOPS FIGHT CAO'S ARMY AND GET WEAKENED AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.
FOR THE PAST FEW DAYS, WU'S BEEN GIVING US SOME ROOM ..

HE HOPES TO LEAD THE DRAGON'S ADVISOR TO HIS DEATH...
THE REASON IS QUITE SIMPLE ...

HE'S LETTING SHIRO MOVE ON HIS OWN AGAIN.
AND THIS TIME ...

JUST HOW DID YOU COME TO THINK THAT? IS THERE ANY PROOF?!
BROTHER!
COLD SWEAT FLOWING CONSTANTLY
I'LL TRY AND CATCH UP WITH THEM! THEN I'LL KILL EVERY LAST ONE OF THOSE WU BASTARDS!
THEY DIDN'T TAKE A SINGLE SOLDIER WITH THEM!
THE LETTER THAT SHIRO BROUGHT BACK FROM KONG MING CLEARLY SAYS SO.
YES

AH?
STAY RIGHT THERE !!!
WAIT !!!
WHICH MEANS THAT NEITHER OF GUAN YU, ZHAO YUN OR YOU CAN GO MISSING BEFORE THIS UPCOMING BATTLE.
RIGHT NOW CAO CAO'S ARMY IS GATHERING AT XIA KOU!
DOESN'T KONG MING ALWAYS TAKE SOME KIND OF ACTION IN SITUATIONS LIKE THESE?
JUST THINK
SHIRO AND THE OTHERS
BUT! BUT!

"THAT ONE" WILL DO A BETTER JOB THAN ANY OF YOU HERE...
HE TOOK AN ASSURANCE TO MAKE SURE THAT NOTHING BAD WOULD HAPPEN...

"THAT ONE", YOU SAY?!
HUH?

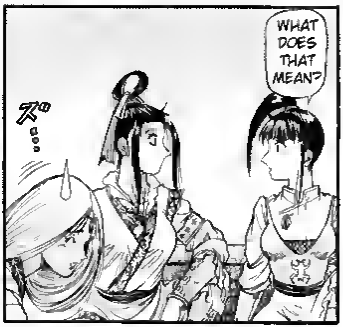
HAA CHEWWW...

OH! I'M SORRY, DID I SNEEZE ON YOU?
WHY YOU!
THAT'S WEIRD... I NEVER CAUGHT A COLD IN MY LIFE!
SNIFF
HUH?
WHY DID KONG MING ASK US TO TAKE THE PRINCESS ALONG?
I DON'T GET IT!
I CAN BE WITH THE PRINCESS, I FEEL REALLY HAPPY! ♡
AH! BUT,
IF HE DID THEN THERE MUST BE A GOOD REASON BEHIND IT.
HA HA!
SUCH A CUTE LITTLE GIRL!
AWW! REALLY?
THIS SILLY PRINCESS BROUGHT AI LIN TOO!

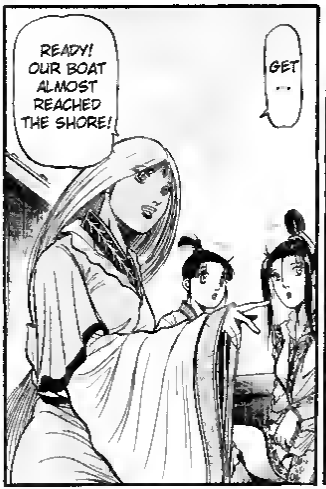
IS IT ?!
EVERYTHING IS PERFECT!
THE SUN FEELS SO GOOD!
ヒュウ
ウウ..
ONLY THE SOUND OF THE STRONG NORTHERN WIND CAN BE HEARD.
WHAT THE
LIAN HUA, CAN'T YOU DO SOMETHING ABOUT HIM?
HEY!
ヒュオオ
オオオ
EEK..

BACK THERE, I WAS RIGHT BESIDE MASUMI AND I COULDN'T DO A THING TO HELP HER...
YOU TELL ME. WHAT WORDS CAN I USE TO CONSOLE HIM?
...
SISTER LIAN HUA ...
YEAH WELL ..
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?!
HE'S JUST SULKING CAUSE HE DOESN'T HAVE HIS "PARTNER" BACK!
AND YOU HAVE SOME DUTY TO PAY HIM BACK FOR WHAT HAPPENED, RIGHT?
DON'T YOU GET IT?
JUST GO ON AND "SPEND THE NIGHT" WITH HIM IN HER PLACE! ♡
!
WHAT ?!

HOW WOULD I KNOW? BUT MY MAIDS SAY IT ALWAYS MAKES A GUY VERY HAPPY
WELL...

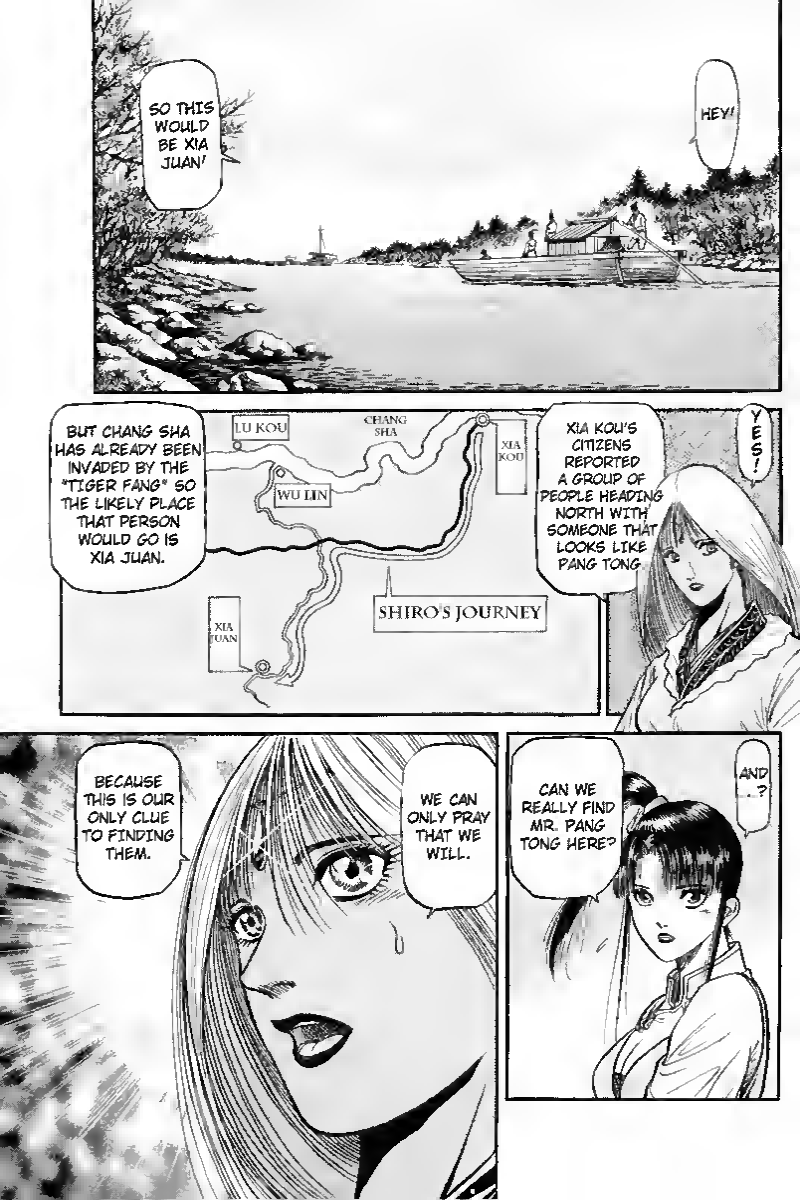

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

I'M NOT THAT OLD! AND HOW CAN I EXPLAIN SUCH A THING?
NO I WON'T! NOT A CHANCE!
?
YUE YING IS OLDER THAN WE ARE! I'M SURE THAT SHE CAN EXPLAIN IT TO US!
OH!


READY! OUR BOAT ALMOST REACHED THE SHORE!
GET...

AH!

HMM
HOW OLD ARE YOU?


SO THIS WOULD BE XIA JUAN!
HEY!
BUT CHANG SHA HAS ALREADY BEEN INVADED BY THE "TIGER FANG" SO THE LIKELY PLACE THAT PERSON WOULD GO IS XIA JUAN.
LU KOU
CHANG SHA
XIA KOU
WU LIN
XIA JUAN
SHIRO'S JOURNEY
XIA KOU'S CITIZENS REPORTED A GROUP OF PEOPLE HEADING NORTH WITH SOMEONE THAT LOOKS LIKE PANG TONG
YES!
BECAUSE THIS IS OUR ONLY CLUE TO FINDING THEM.
WE CAN ONLY PRAY THAT WE WILL.
CAN WE REALLY FIND MR. PANG TONG HERE?
AND..?

THERE'S SO MANY CARGO BOATS!
OH GOD!

THIS IS FOOD FOR LIU KOU?
SO ...

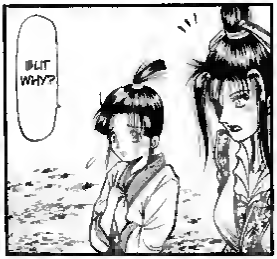
ARE YOU PLANNING TO LET THOSE SELFLESS SOLDIERS STARVE?
WU'S ARMY IS FIGHTING CAO'S ARMY!
!

AH!
!

MOVE IT!
OLD MAN!

AH!
ARRGH!
STAND UP! MOVE FASTER!

AH!
I'M GOING TO GIVE HIM A LESSON IN MANNERS!
HOW DARE HE KICK HIM?!


BUT WHY?

I PROMISED KONG MING THAT I WOULDN'T LET PRETTY BOY ZHOU FIND OUT THAT I'M SEARCHING FOR PANG TUNG ...
YEAH

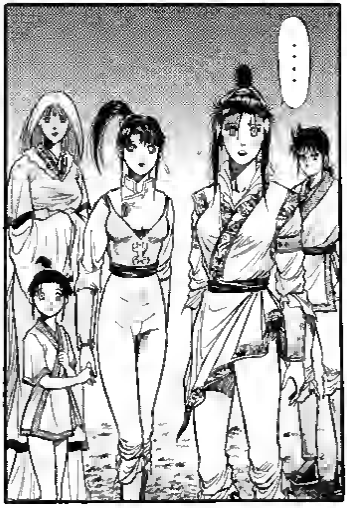
AH!
YEEH!!

NO, DON'T...!
THOSE SOLDIERS WILL FIND OUT WHO YOU ARE IF YOU DO THAT!

DAMN THEM!
!

IF HE FOUND OUT ABOUT ME BEING HERE...
PLUS I LIED TO HIM BY SAYING I WOULD RETURN TO CHAI SANG.
OUCH! MAN, WOULD HE BE PISSED! THAT PRETTY BOY CAN BECOME EVEN SCARIER THAN MY BROTHER!

NOT TO MENTION THEY'VE TAKEN ALL OUR RICE TO FEED THE ARMY!
THEY TOOK ALL THE YOUNG ONES TO WAR! WHAT'S LEFT NOW ARE OLD MEN BEING WORKED TO DEATH!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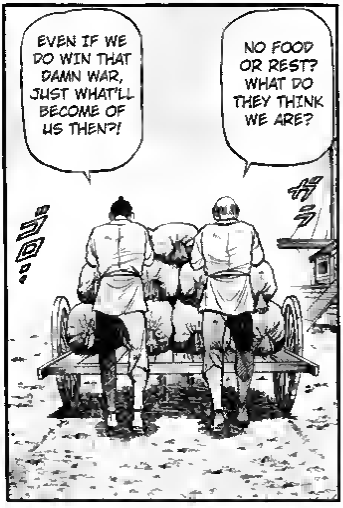
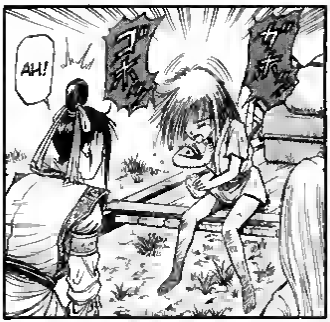

EVEN IF WE DO WIN THAT DAMN WAR, JUST WHAT'LL BECOME OF US THEN?!
NO FOOD OR REST? WHAT DO THEY THINK WE ARE?

EVEN THE HORSE GUY ONLY HAD A MULE LEFT!
WHAT A DAY!
BESIDES, THIS MULE IS DOING A GOOD JOB AT CARRYING OUR LUGGAGE SO IT DOESN'T MATTER ...
THAT'S BECAUSE ALL THE HORSES WERE SENT TO FIGHT AT THE FRONT LINE!
AND I CAN'T SEE AN INN AROUND HERE...
THE SUN HAS ALREADY SET!
WHAT IF WE GET ATTACKED ...?!
A MULE CAN'T HELP IN A FIGHT...

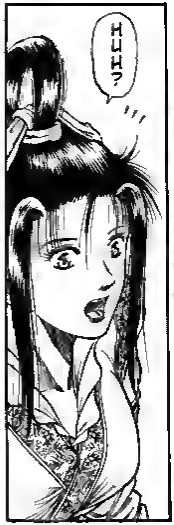
BUT IT GETS SO COLD AT NIGHT THAT WE COULD FREEZE TO DEATH!
SLEEP IN THE WILD?
WHAT?
LOOKS LIKE WE'LL CAMP OUTSIDE
ALL THEIR FOOD WAS TAKEN TO FEED THE ARMY AND THEY'RE LEFT WITH ALMOST NOTHING. DO YOU REALLY SUPPOSE THEY'LL LET US STAY OVERNIGHT?
TRUE ENOUGH, BUT DIDN'T YOU SEE THAT OLD MAN'S FACE?
AI LIN?
TREATED LIKE A HORSE? THANKS A LOT!
BUT WHO KNOWS? MAYBE THEY'D RENT US A STABLE OR SOMETHING.
HM?

HUH?
SHE SAYS SHE'S TOO HUNGRY TO MOVE.
HUM ...
FOR HOW LONG HAVEN'T YOU EATEN?
DON'T EAT SO FAST, YOU'LL CHOKE YOURSELF!
FOUR...

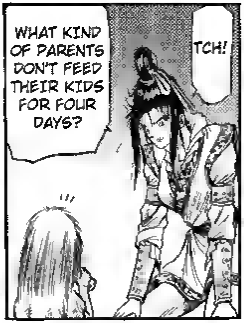

AH!

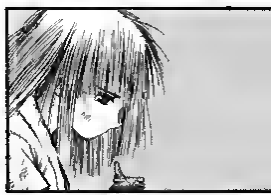
EH?!
YOU DIDN'T GET FOOD FOR FOUR DAYS?

HM!
AI LIN' GET WATER!


HUH?

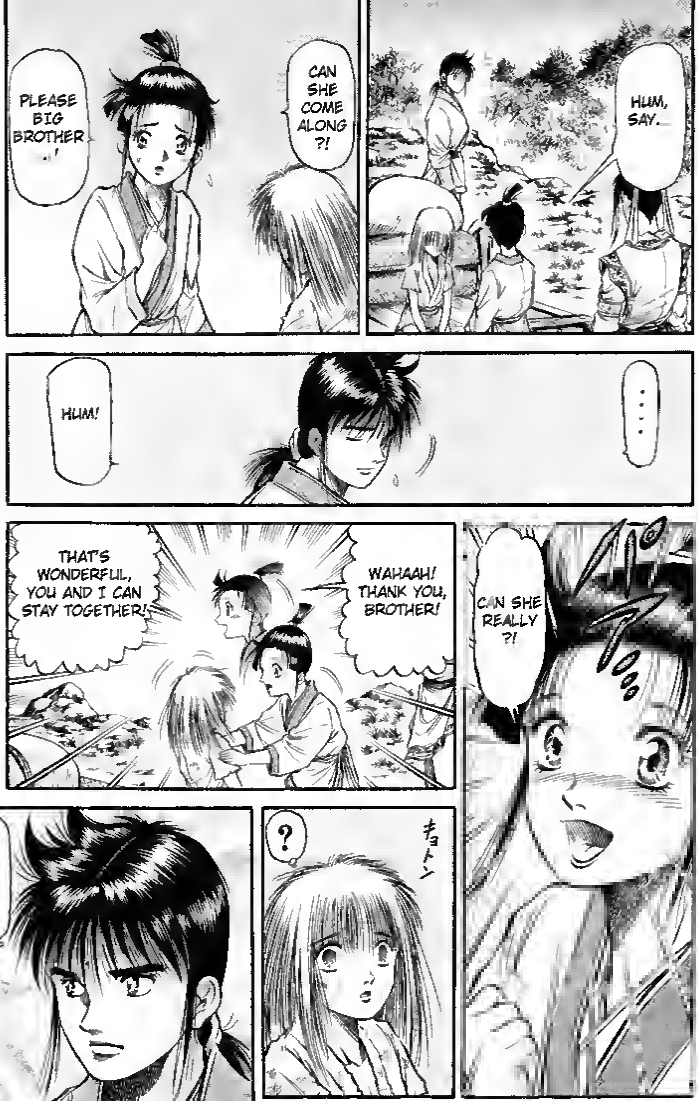
FATHER AND MOTHER
WERE KILLED BY THE SOLDIERS


TCH!
WHAT KIND OF PARENTS DON'T FEED THEIR KIDS FOR FOUR DAYS?



HUH ?!
THEY SAID THAT MY PARENTS HID RICE FROM THEM ...
JU ...
JUST FOR THAT?
THEY ALSO SAID THAT WAS A BAD THING AND KILLED THEM ...
THEY MADE A MODEL OUT OF THEM!
ARE YOU SERIOUS ...?
WELL IT'S COMMON PRACTISE IN THIS DAY AND AGE...
ESPECIALLY DURING TIMES OF WAR, IT'S TO BE EXPECTED ...
IF THEY KILL THEM IN PUBLIC, NO ONE ELSE WOULD DARE HIDE RICE!
WITHOUT A DOUBT, IT'S THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO DEAL WITH THAT.

WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER FARMERS?
ISN'T THERE ANYONE AT ALL THAT COULD HELP THIS CHILD?
NO... THERE ISN'T. .
!
BECAUSE THEY DON'T EVEN HAVE ENOUGH FOOD FOR THEIR OWN CHILDREN.
WHY WOULD THEY OFFER HELP TO TOTAL STRANGERS WHEN THEY'RE STARVING?
MY LATE BROTHER ONCE SAID ...
THAT AFTER MY PARENTS DIED, THERE WASN'T ANY ONE WILLING TO HELP US.
AI LIN ...
BUT... HOW?!
CAN SUCH A LOGIC BE CONSIDERED COMMON SENSE?!

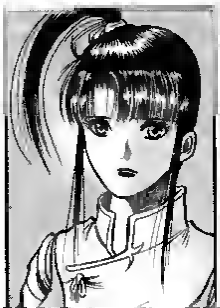

PLEASE BIG BROTHER..!
CAN SHE COME ALONG?!
HUM, SAY...
HUM!
...
THAT'S WONDERFUL, YOU AND I CAN STAY TOGETHER!
WAHAAH! THANK YOU, BROTHER!
CAN SHE REALLY?!
.....
?
チョトン

NOTHING WILL GROW DURING WINTER AND THEIR RICE WAS TAKEN ALREADY..
BUT, WINTER IS AT THEIR DOOR AND IT'LL BE HARSH!

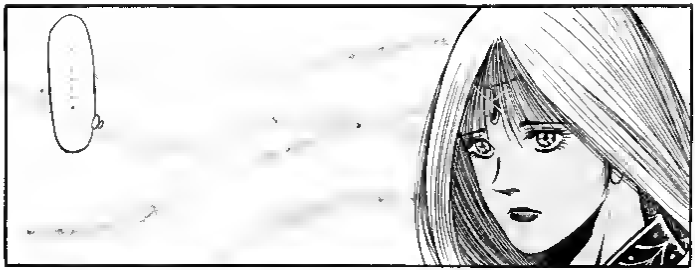
THEY CAN STILL MAKE IT FOR NOW.

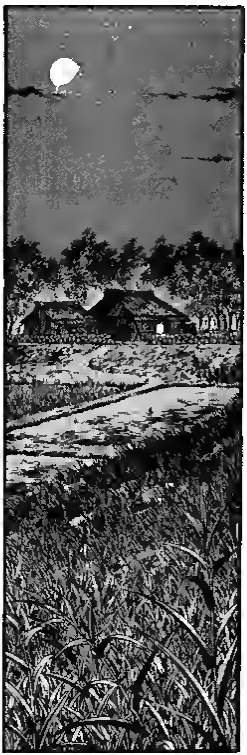
HOW WILL THEY SURVIVE THIS IS BEYOND ME..
IT'LL MAKE IT EVEN HARDER ON THOSE EMPTY-HANDED FARMERS!

SON OF DRAGON'S



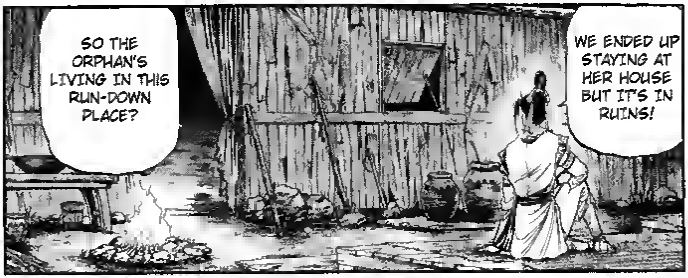
JUST WHAT GOOD IS THERE IN THAT WAR?!
CAN ANYONE TELL ME?





ZZ..
ZZZ..
THEY REALLY LOOK LIKE SISTERS NOW...

SIGH
NO
OH WELL, YUE YING AND THE DRAGON'S SON DIDN'T COME BACK YET?


SO THE ORPHAN'S LIVING IN THIS RUN-DOWN PLACE?
WE ENDED UP STAYING AT HER HOUSE BUT IT'S IN RUINS!

IS THIS BECAUSE OF WAR?
NO ONE TOLD ME OF THESE THINGS BACK AT THE PALACE!
!!!
AND WE'RE LUCKY THAT WE DIDN'T HAVE TO SLEEP OUTSIDE!
IT'S PRETTY NICE AS FAR AS FARMERS' HOMES GO, YOU KNOW
IT'S JUST THAT I DIDN'T KNOW THE COMMONERS ARE LIVING SUCH A LIFE.
YOU'RE RIGHT

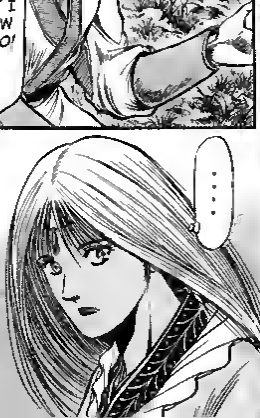
TO WIN THAT DAMN WAR...
THAT WAS THE ONLY THING EVER TO CROSS MY MIND UNTIL NOW. HOW STUPID I WAS!
?...
I DID TOO, YOU KNOW...
UNTIL THE DAY I MET SHIRO.

MISS YUE YING...
WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HOLD THE "FACE OF DESTINY"?

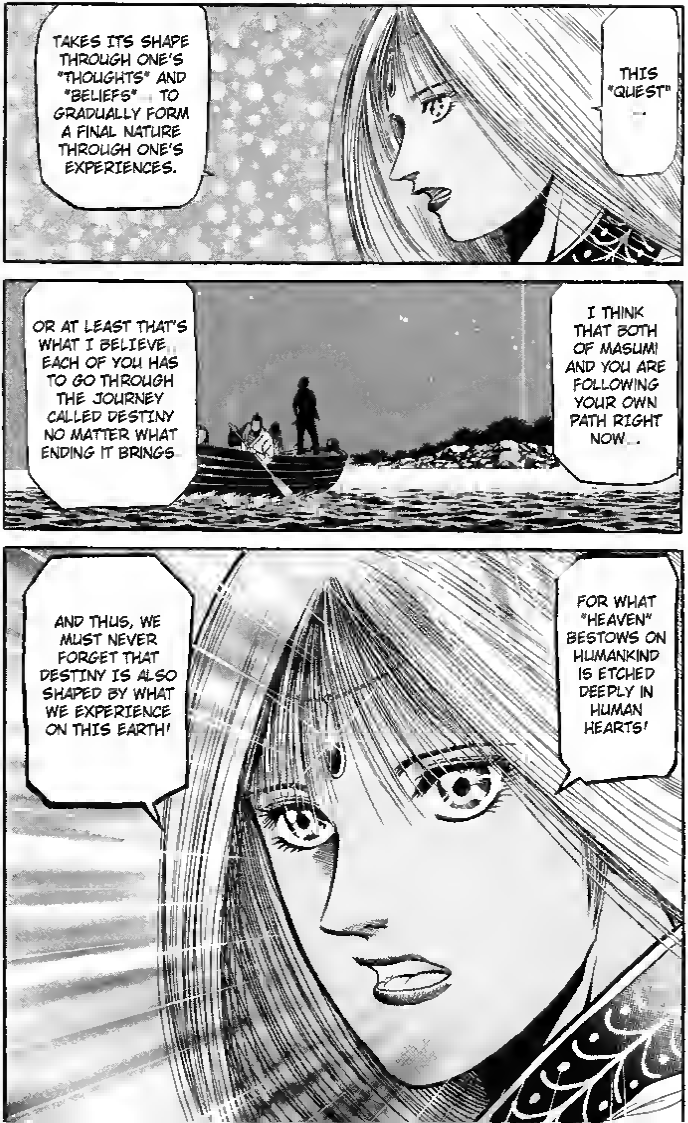
YOU ONCE TOLD ME I HAD THE POWER TO CHANGE FATE BECAUSE I HAD IT WITHIN ME.
BUT, I COULDN'T EVEN SAVE MASUMI WHEN SHE NEEDED ME THE MOST...

RIGHT NOW...
I FEEL SO LOST, THAT I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO!

AND AT THAT TIME SHE EVEN REFUSED TO FOLLOW ME
SHE WENT AS FAR AS THROW HERSELF AT A SWORD TO STOP THE FIGHT!

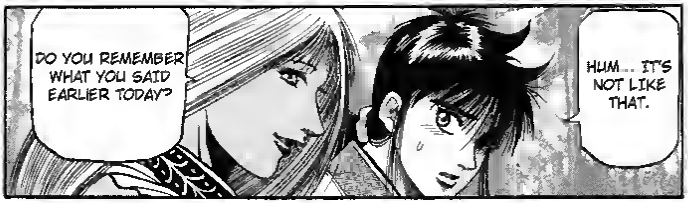

.....

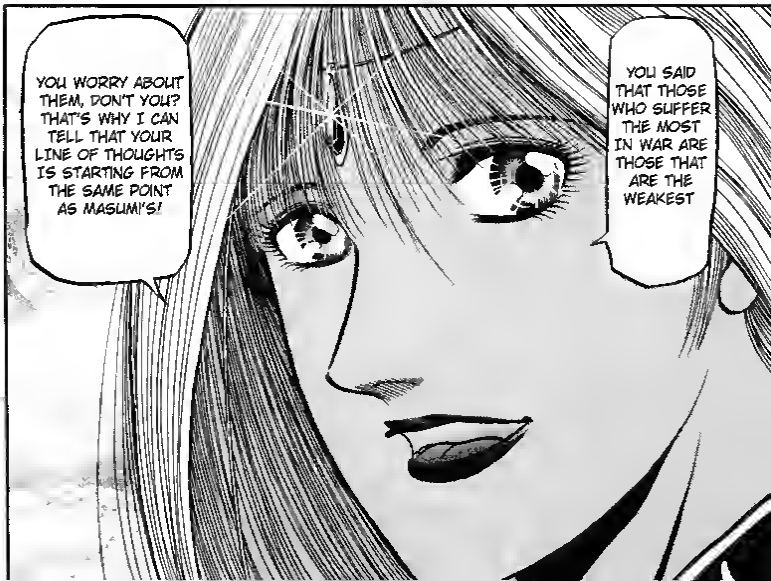
DON'T FORGET THAT BOTH HER.
AND YOURSELF ARE TWO CHILDREN OF THE DRAGON
WHY DOES MASUMI STAY AT THE CAO CAO CAMP?
IT MAY BE THE FATE OF THOSE CALLED THE "DRAGON'S CHILDREN". HER OWN FATE, THAT IS, WHICH GROWS APART FROM YOURS..
EACH BEING THAT COMES TO THIS WORLD HAS HIS OR HER OWN "MISSION".
REGARDLESS OF WETHER THEY HOLD THE "FACE OF DESTINY" OR NOT.
!


TAKES ITS SHAPE THROUGH ONE'S "THOUGHTS" AND "BELIEFS" TO GRADUALLY FORM A FINAL NATURE THROUGH ONE'S EXPERIENCES.
THIS "QUEST" ...
OR AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT I BELIEVE. EACH OF YOU HAS TO GO THROUGH THE JOURNEY CALLED DESTINY NO MATTER WHAT ENDING IT BRINGS.
I THINK THAT BOTH OF MASUMI AND YOU ARE FOLLOWING YOUR OWN PATH RIGHT NOW...
AND THUS, WE MUST NEVER FORGET THAT DESTINY IS ALSO SHAPED BY WHAT WE EXPERIENCE ON THIS EARTH!
FOR WHAT "HEAVEN" BESTOWS ON HUMANKIND IS ETCHED DEEPLY IN HUMAN HEARTS!

!!
. . . .
IF WHAT YOU TELL ME IS TRUE . .
THEN MASUMI AND I WILL KEEP GROWING APART AS TIME GOES, WON'T WE?
MASUMI BELIEVES IN HER "ROAD", WHICH IS DIFFERENT FROM MINE
I'M A MILITARY ADVISOR! I CAN'T WIN A WAR WITHOUT KILLING PEOPLE!
ARE YOU GOING THROUGH SELF DENIAL ABOUT WAR?!
AND IT'S MAKING YOU FEEL MORE HELPLESS BY THE DAY, ISN'T IT?

!!


DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT YOU SAID EARLIER TODAY?
HUM... IT'S NOT LIKE THAT.


YOU WORRY ABOUT THEM, DON'T YOU? THAT'S WHY I CAN TELL THAT YOUR LINE OF THOUGHTS IS STARTING FROM THE SAME POINT AS MASUMI'S!
YOU SAID THAT THOSE WHO SUFFER THE MOST IN WAR ARE THOSE THAT ARE THE WEAKEST

THE SAME AS MASUMI'S ...?
WHAT ?!
!
!!
DOM

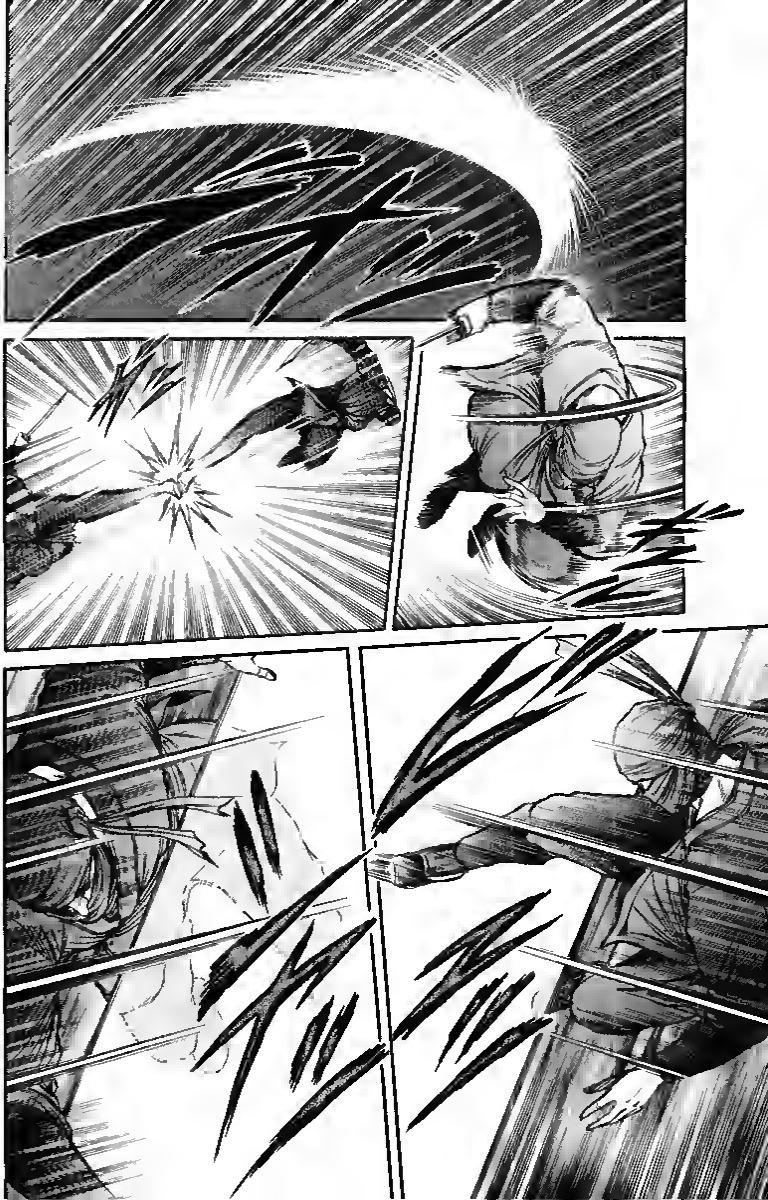
SO YOU BOTH SENSED ME?
HEH!

I CAN'T BELIEVED THAT A WOMAN AND KID ...
HAVE SENSES SHARP ENOUGH TO NOTICE MY PRESENCE!
THIS CAN'T BE!
WE REALIZED THAT HE WAS THERE ONLY AFTER HE GOT THAT CLOSE TO US?

SHIRK
LET ME GUESS . WU'S DOGS?!
YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE FARMERS TO ME .
OH...
THE ATMOSPHERE HAS BECOME TENSE!
YOU ARE THE ENEMY!
THAT MEANS ...

SO HE WASN'T ALONE AFTER ALL!
BAD TIME!
I HAVE REACT NOW OR YUE YING MIGHT BE IN DANGER!
HM
THIS IS REALLY BAD...
HM?
IS IT ...?
THAT STANCE ...!
NNN!

SCATTER!
NOW!
AIR SPLITTING MOUNTAIN!!



WHAT?!
THEY DODGED IT.
AIR SPLITTING MOUNTAIN...
OH, MY!
NICELY DONE!~

AND TO THINK THAT A STUPID BRAT
LIKE YOU CAN USE "AIR SPLITTING MOUNTAIN"!

!!!

HE KNOWS ABOUT IT?!
IT'S NOT JUST HIM EITHER... EVEN THE TIGER FANG COULDN'T DODGE THIS ATTACK BUT THOSE SOLDIERS DID IT IN A FLASH! JUST WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE?

KU KU KU!
DON'T LOOK SO STUNNED, KID!
WE'RE THE CITIZENS OF BAI YUE!
AND I'M CALLED JIANG XI'S "WHITE TIGER"! YANG YUE!
CHAPTER 44 END

HEY GUYS,

A NEW CHAPTER OF RYUURODEN IS RELEASED! JANKENPON'S STILL SEARCHING FOR STAR OCEAN TRANSLATORS AND RYUURODEN PROOFREADERS SO EMAIL US AT JOIN@JANKENPON.DE IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN HELPING OUT. SEE YA ALL AROUND!

- APEMAN

STAFF:
- RAWS: RAVENOUSREADER
- TRANSLATION: SANDOITCH!
- PROOFREADER: SHIMMY
- EDITOR: RAVENOUSREADER
- QC: APEMAN

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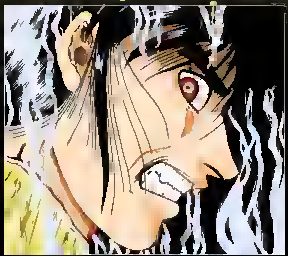
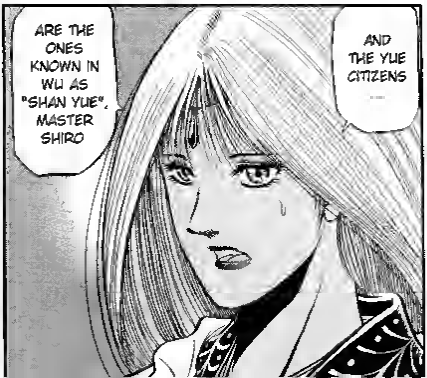


CHAPTER 45
FOOTPRINTS OF THE PHOENIX

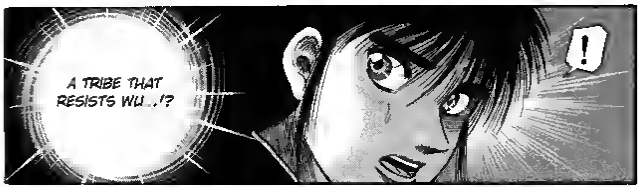
Hu T T T...

!
BAI YUE IS THE OFFICIAL TITLE OF THE YUE TRIBE

BAI YUE CITIZENS ...?


ARE THE ONES KNOWN IN WU AS "SHAN YUE", MASTER SHIRO
AND THE YUE CITIZENS ...

I'VE HEARD THEY RESIST WU'S CONTROL AND ARE STILL AT VIOLENT ODDS WITH WU EVEN TO THIS DAY.
THEY'RE THE DWELLERS IN THE GREAT SOUTHERN MOUNTAIN RANGES OF WU...


A TRIBE THAT RESISTS WU...!?
!

HOW DARE YOU WU DOGS PRETEND NOT TO KNOW OF US
HMM...

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE HEARD OF THIS
THEY SAID THE YUE TRIBE? THEY'RE NOT MENTIONED IN ANY OF THE HISTORY BOOKS!

NOT SOMEONE WHO CAN USE THE "EMPTY MOUNTAIN SPLIT" ATTACK.
BUT SINCE KNOWN THAT YOU'RE WITH WU, WE CAN'T SIMPLY LET YOU GO...
SHOW ME WHAT YOU CAN DO!
I'M CALLED YAN WU PUNK--!

LIH!
!!
THAT'S SOME KILLING INTENT!
IS HE REALLY GOING TO TRY AND KILL US HERE?! WHY?!
YUE YIN IS BEHIND ME...
AND WITH THE SWIFTNESS OF HIS MEN, I DON'T THINK WE CAN EITHER ESCAPE OR EVADE THEM.
STOP WAVERING!
THE ONLY THING I CAN DO RIGHT NOW IS TO FIGHT!

I NEED TO GET CLOSER TO HIM...
HE MANAGED TO EVADE MY LAST ATTACK BECAUSE HE HAD ENOUGH ROOM.
CHARGING HEAD ON?
!
AND ATTACK AGAIN!
HUH?

AH!
I COULDN'T NAIL HIS VITAL POINTS.
CAN'T BE HELPED, THERE'S NO TIME TO HESITATE!

HUH!?

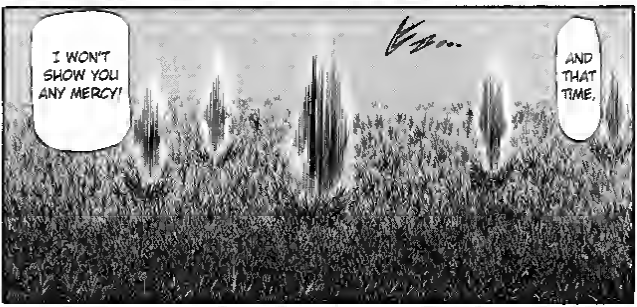
* Sa (Ripping sound)

!!!
WHAT?
WHA
...

?
HOW'S THIS POSSIBLE!? I SHOULD'VE BLOCKED HIS DOWNWARD SLASH MID WAY!
THIS IS THE "EMPTY MOUNTAIN SPLIT" TECHNIQUE!
THIS IS THE YIN SWORD PLAY'S SECRET TECHNIQUE "SHAKING MOUNTAIN SPLIT".
DON'T THINK FOR A MOMENT THERE ARE ONLY THOSE FEW VARIATIONS TO THE "EMPTY MOUNTAIN SPLIT" TECHNIQUE
!!
YIN SWORD PLAY!

OH!
999...
WU SOLDIERS!
THOSE ARE...
THE PESTS HAVE ARRIVED!
DAMN...
OVER THERE!
DON'T LET A SINGLE ONE OF THE SHAN YUE DOGS ESCAPE!
AH!

SAVE IT FOR NEXT TIME WE MEET, PUNK...
WELL...


I WON'T SHOW YOU ANY MERCY!
AND THAT TIME,

YAN WU...
JUST WHO IN THE WORLD IS HE?
AMAZING...

AH!
YOU DAMN SHUN YUE!
WE GOT YOU AT LAST ...

THE SHAN YUE PEOPLE ARE THE ONES WHO JUST ESCAPED
YOU GOT IT ALL WRONG
SHAN YUE S
DO YOU THINK WE DIDN'T SEE YOU BURN THE RATIONS BY THE RIVER AND THEN ESCAPE IN THIS DIRECTION?
STOP LYING!
SO WE WON'T SHOW YOU ANY MERCY, NOT EVEN TO THE WOMEN OR CHILDREN!
YOU KEEP ATTACKING OUR SUPPLIES,
BURN?
!

HMM...
THEY DON'T SEEM WILLING TO LISTEN.
WHAT SHOULD WE DO NOW, MASTER SHIRO?

SO...
THOSE FOLKS ARE WANTED BY THE WU ARMY FOR ATTACKING THEIR RATIONS.

TO BE ARRESTED SEEMS LIKE THE BETTER OPTION FOR US NOW.
AND IT'S NOT LIKE WE CAN FIGHT OFF THE WU ARMY.

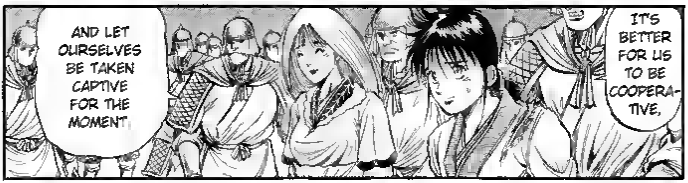
WAH!

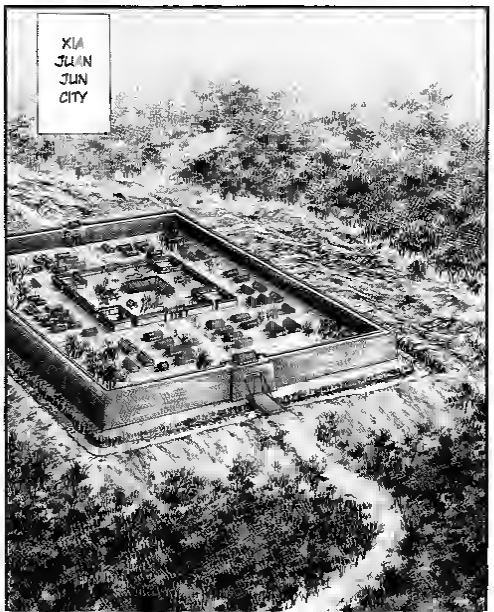
ARGH!
ハッキ
HUH?

ARE REFUSING TO YIELD!
THESE PEOPLE ...
AH!
IS THIS THE SORT OF ATTITUDE TO BE SHOWING TOWARDS THE MASTER OF WU - XUAN QUAN GONG'S YOUNGER SISTER, PRINCESS REN?
YOU BLIND IDIOTS!
HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT AFTER INTRUDING A WOMAN'S ROOM WITH A SWORD IN HAND?
YIELD ?
THE PRINCESS ?!

SHIRO ?
DRAGON'S SON!

PRINCESS!
!


AND LET OURSELVES BE TAKEN CAPTIVE FOR THE MOMENT.
IT'S BETTER FOR US TO BE COOPERATIVE,


XIA JUAN JUN CITY

HUH ?

SO YOU MANAGED TO CATCH SHAN YUE?
OH!
XIA JUAN JUN PREFECT - GAN ZE
MY USELESS UNDERLINGS COULD ONLY ARREST WOMEN AND CHILDREN
HMM... SMALL FRY, HUH?
THEY'RE ONLY A BUNCH OF WOMEN AND ONE YOUNGSTER
REPLYING, PREFECT GAN!
HOWEVER, THERE IS A STRANGE MATTER...
...
WHO HAS SELF-PROFESSED TO BE PRINCESS REN
!
AMONGST THEM, THERE IS ONE ...

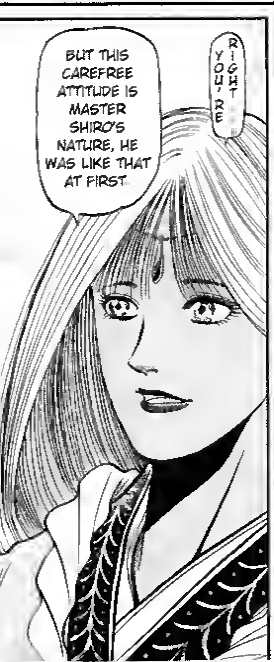
WHAT?
PRINCESS REN?
HEY!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THIS?
INCARCERATING THE MASTER OF WU'S YOUNGER SISTER IN A DUNGEON,
YOU GOT SOME GUTS!
SHUT IT, YOU WITCH!
AH!

SO WHAT IF YOU ARE THE PRINCESS?
YOU LOT ARE ONLY A BUNCH OF MURDERERS!
HEY! WE HAVE ORDERS NOT TO BEHAVE VIOLENTLY TOWARDS THEM.
WHO CARES? THERE'S NO NEED TO BE NICE TOWARDS SHAN YUE
MY BROTHER'S COMPANY
WAS TOTALLY DESTROYED BY THEM!
!
IF I COULD, I'D...
FINISH THESE PEOPLE OFF WITH MY OWN TWO HANDS
SO THAT'S THE STORY
STILL, JUST BE PATIENT FOR NOW

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN WU AND SHAN YUE CITIZENS IS PRETTY SERIOUS
IT SEEMS
ATTACKED US AS SOON AS HE FOUND OUT THAT WE'RE WU'S ALLIES
HMM THE SHAN YUE GUY THAT CALLS HIMSELF YAN WU
HOW CAN YOU BE SO CARELESS? I REALLY CAN'T PUT UP WITH YOU!
THAT'S TRUE, ISN'T IT?
HUH ?
IT'S YOUR FAULT
NOW WE GOT BRANDED AS YUE'S TRIBESMEN.
IT'S ALL BECAUSE YOU FOUGHT WITH THOSE SHAN YUE JERKS!

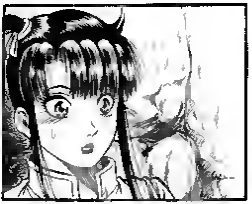
Laughter in the background

THERE'S NO NEED TO LOSE SLEEP OVER SPILLED MILK
"THE BOAT WILL NATURALLY SAIL STRAIGHT ONCE IT NEARS THE BRIDGE."*


BUT THIS CAREFREE ATTITUDE IS MASTER SHIRO'S NATURE, HE WAS LIKE THAT AT FIRST
YOU'RE RIGHT...

HE WAS SULKING JUST THIS MORNING AND NOW...
THAT'S WEIRD...

I DIDN'T REALIZE YOU'RE ACTUALLY SO SPINELESS.
THAT SO?
HA...

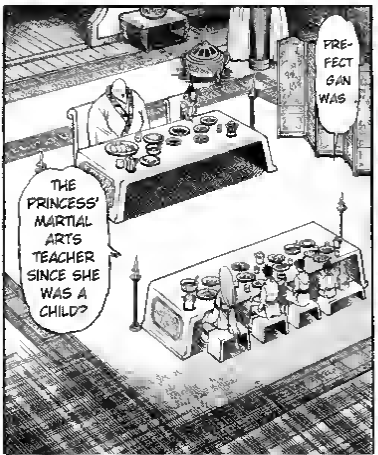


EH ?!
I THINK IT'S SO UNFAIR!
...
WHILE I WAS OF NO HELP TO HIM EVEN AFTER WE SPENT A WHOLE DAY TOGETHER.
HE RECOVERED THANKS TO SOMETHING YOU SAID, DIDN'T HE?
!
?
LIAN HUA
NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS! NOW GET LOST!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

WE WON'T LET WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR PARENTS HAPPEN TO YOU TOO.
THERE'S NOTHING TO FEAR, OK?
IT'S ALRIGHT!
DRAGON'S SON...
AH...!?
...
PRINCESS REN
...
!

IT REALLY IS YOU!
♡
WAH HA HA HA!
ウウウ
ハッ
ウ
GAN ZE?
!

HOW WOULD I KNOW?
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?


PRE-FECT GAN WAS
THE PRINCESS' MARTIAL ARTS TEACHER SINCE SHE WAS A CHILD?

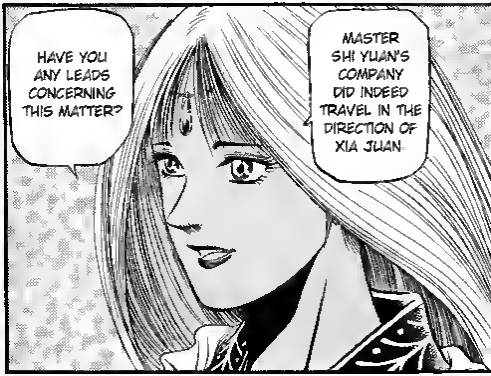
I WOULD NEVER HAVE LET THOSE USELESS BUMS BE SO RUDE TO YOU IF I HAD BEEN THERE
SORRY, PRINCESS.
HMM...
THAT'S ABOUT RIGHT.
YOU CAN PUNISH THOSE IDIOTS BY MAKING THEM SPAR WITH YOU. JUST LIKE OLD TIMES, EH?
I KNOW!
BUT CONCERNING WHAT WE JUST DISCUSSED, I WANT YOUR FULL SUPPORT OK, GAN ZE?
FORGET IT! I'LL DROP THOSE SOLDIERS' CASE...
THIS- THIS CAN'T BE MENTIONED?
EH?
AND JUST WHO ASKED YOU TO BRING UP THE LONG-DEAD PAST?
BAH! IT FIGURES AFTER LOOKING AT HER
JUST WHAT KIND OF UPBRINGING DID THE PRINCESS HAVE?

OH! SURE I DO!
WELL? DO YOU REMEMBER NOW?
THE "FIND ZHONG TONG" SUBJECT
THAT LAYER OF RUBBER MAY BE MORE PROTECTIVE THAN THE "HARDENING" TECHNIQUE
HE CAN STILL SMILE AFTER A SQUARE PUNCH TO THE JAW?

WHAT DID WE JUST DISCUSS?
HUH?

PRE-FECT, YOUR HIGH-NESS.

....


HAVE YOU ANY LEADS CONCERNING THIS MATTER?
MASTER SHI YUAN'S COMPANY DID INDEED TRAVEL IN THE DIRECTION OF XIA JUAN.

A TRAVELING COMPANY
IT CAN'T BE "THAT INCIDENT", CAN IT?
!
YOU KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT THIS?
YES
ONE INCIDENT MAY BE LINKED TO THOSE SHAN YUE CITIZENS THAT HAD A CLASH WITH THE DRAGON ADVISOR.
I BELIEVE THE PRINCESS SHOULD BE AWARE OF THIS!
THERE'S A REGULAR SUPPLY OF ARMY RATIONS BEING SENT FROM XIA JUAN TO THE COASTAL AREA
SHAN YUE?

YI JU?
A PORTION HAD TO PASS THROUGH THE SHAN YUE REGION OF YI JU.
HOWEVER, NOT ALL THE RATIONS COME FROM XIA JUAN
STILL, TRANSPORTING RATIONS FROM YI JU TO THE COAST VIA THE CHANG JIANG RIVER IS TAKING THE LONGER ROUTE.
CHANG JIANG RIVER
MOUNTAINS
XIA JUAN
YI JU
YES. XIA JUAN'S PRODUCTS ALONE AREN'T ENOUGH TO FEED THE HUGE ARMY AT THE COAST.
COMPARED TO THE WATER-BASED ROUTE FROM YI JU, THE LAND ROUTE IS SO MUCH QUICKER
ONCE AT XIA JUAN, WE JUST NEED TO USE A FEW BOATS TO TRANSPORT THEM TO THE COAST.
GETS THE RATIONS FROM YI JU VIA MU FU MOUNTAINS TO XIA JUAN VERY QUICKLY
YI JU
IN COMPARISON, TAKING THE LAND ROUTE,
MOUNTAINS
TO THE COAST
XIA JUAN

HAVE THEIR SIGHTS SET ON THAT FOOD
BUT THOSE SHAN YUE PEOPLE...
SO THAT IS THE SITUATION.
HMM!
THEY OFTEN ATTACK THOSE COMPANIES THAT TRANSPORT RATIONS USING THE MU FU MOUNTAIN PASS
EVEN THOSE SHAN YUE PEOPLE WHO HAIL FROM THE JIANG XI REGION CAN BE FOUND AT MU FU MOUNTAIN
I, THE PREFECT, WOULD END UP LOSING FACE
IF THIS KEEPS UP
커크크...
TO THINK THAT EVEN XIA JUAN'S HARBOR HAS BECOME THEIR TARGET

WE'RE JUST AFTER ZHONG TONG'S WHEREABOUTS!
BUT STOP RATTLING ON!
WHAT A SCARY FACE!
OW!
I'LL HELP THEN!
DON'T YOU FORGET AGAIN, PIG FOR BRAINS!
I SHOULD JUST HURY YOU ALIVE!
CLAP!
OH! I FORGOT ABOUT THAT
!!
THERE WAS NEWS THAT A COMPANY TRAVELING FROM XIA KO WAS ATTACKED BY YUE.
RIGHT, AT ONE TIME ALONG THAT PASS...

IS THERE EVEN A HEAD THERE?
IT IS, I SWEAR ON THE HEAD ON MY SHOULDERS ♡
EH, GAN ZE?
REALLY NOW?
ONLY LUGGAGE WAS FOUND AT THE SCENE BUT THERE WAS NO SIGN OF CORPSES.
THE STR NGE THING IS:
THERE WAS NO EYE WITNESS FOR THAT CASE
I HAVE NO CLUE
WHAT'S GOING ON?
ONLY LUG-GAGE?
!

WELL THEN!
THEY COULD HAVE BEEN MAULED BY WILD BEASTS OR SOMETHING!
BUT ARROWS THAT ARE USED BY THE SHAN YUE PEOPLE WERE FOUND ON THE LUGGAGE.
YOU SHOULD'VE SAID THAT EARLIER!
OH WELL ...
WE FINALLY GOT OURSELVES A LEAD
SON-S DRAGON-S
IT CAN'T BE HELPED ...
WE'LL HAVE TO CONFRONT THE SHAN YUE FIGHTERS AGAIN.

THOUGH THERE'S NO PROOF THAT THE PEOPLE ATTACKED WERE ZHONG TONG'S...
WE SHOULD STILL LOOK INTO THE MATTER.
HUM.
I'LL LEND YOU SOME SOLDIERS, THEN.
HUH?
ARE YOU SERIOUS?
OH OH OH!
IF THE WORLD FAMOUS DRAGON ADVISOR CAN LEND ME A HAND,
THEN I'LL FINALLY SWEEP THOSE SHAN YUE SCOUNDRELS AWAY!
SFX Shocked

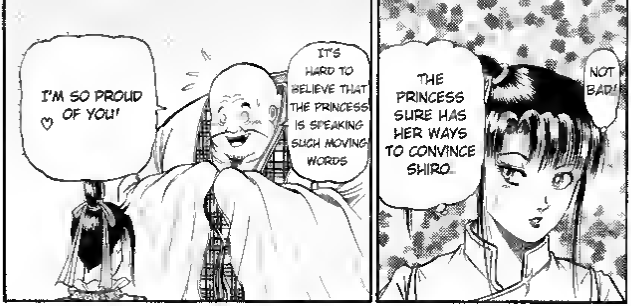
WAIT...
I DIDN'T MEAN TO FIGHT THEM
HEY! DRAGO N'S SON...
DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU COULD NEGOTIATE WITH THEM?
THE CIVIL RIVALRY BETWEEN WU'S CITIZENS AND THOSE YUE TRIBE PEOPLE...
HAS BEEN AT A VIOLENT, FEVER PITCH SINCE DAYS LONG PAST
I HEARD FROM HONOR-ABLE BROTHER, XUN CI.
THAT FORCE IS THE ONLY THING TO EMPLOY AGAINST THOSE ILLITERATE MOUNTAIN DWELLERS
YOU'VE SEEN THE REACTION FROM THOSE DUNGEON GUARDS, RIGHT?
THAT KIND OF HATE MAKES IT VERY TRICKY TO TALK IT OVER WITH THEM

SAFEGUARDING THOSE SHOULD BE THE GENERAL'S DUTY, RIGHT?
PLUS THOSE SHAN YUE PEOPLE ATTACKED CRITICAL RATIONS FOR THE WU ARMY'S RESISTANCE AGAINST CAO'S ARMY

SO OUR GOAL SHOULD BE TO QUICKLY SUPPRESS THE SHAN YUE THREAT AND FIND OUT JUST WHAT HAPPENED TO ZHONG TONG'S PEOPLE, RIGHT?
THERE'S ALSO NO TELLING WHEN AN ALL-OUT BATTLE WITH CAO CAO MIGHT START,

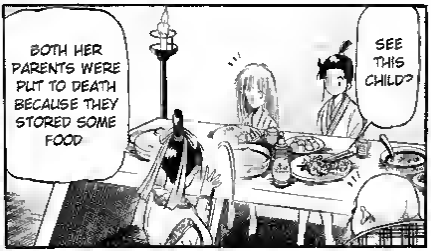
I GOT THAT, PRINCESS REN.
YES!

A GENERAL, HUH...?


I'M SO PROUD OF YOU!
IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT THE PRINCESS IS SPEAKING SUCH MOVING WORDS
THE PRINCESS SURE HAS HER WAYS TO CONVINCE SHIRO...
NOT BAD!

I NEARLY FORGOT SOMETHING IMPORTANT...
OH RIGHT, GAN ZE!

!


BOTH HER PARENTS WERE PUT TO DEATH BECAUSE THEY STORED SOME FOOD
SEE THIS CHILD?

SO YOU'LL LESSEN THE TAXES A LITTLE FOR YOUR PEOPLE'S COMFORT!
THEY MAY BE FARMERS BUT THEY STILL CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT FOOD.

...
WHY DON'T YOU ANSWER ME?
WHAT IS THE MATTER?
AS YOU WISH, PRINCESS.
OF COURSE!
IS TOTALLY DIFFERENT FROM A MOMENT AGO
THE PREFECT'S AURA...
HUM!
...

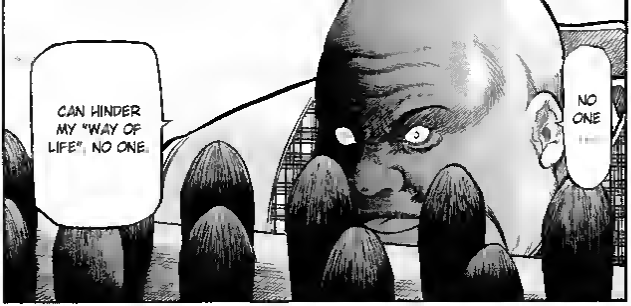
TO THINK THAT THE KID IS THE DRAGON ADVISOR!
UN-BE-LIEV-ABLE!
I HAVE TO HURRY BACK...
AND INFORM MASTER YAN!!
INFILTRATING THE CITY IS QUITE THE FEAT
SHAN YUE, HUH?
HO!

HE MAY REALLY BE ABLE TO GET RID OF THE DRAGON'S SON!
ZHOU YU WAS RIGHT...

HE'S SLY ENOUGH TO SUCCESS-FULLY TRICK THE DRAGON
BUT THAT ONE CALLED GAN ZE...

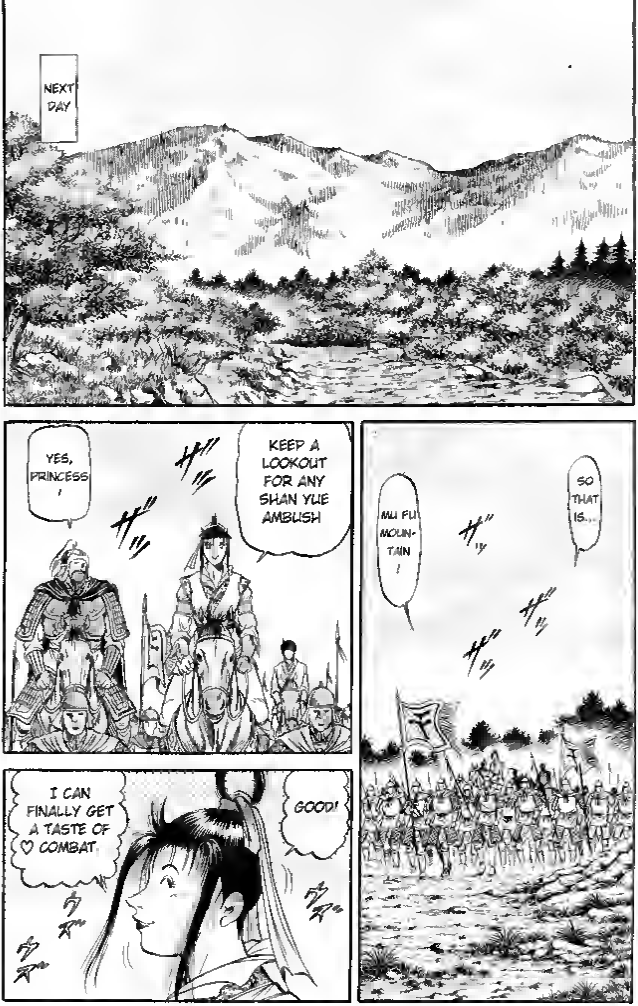
HEE HEE
TWO DIED TODAY...

ONE
TWO ...


NO ONE...
CAN HINDER MY "WAY OF LIFE", NO ONE.

IT'S THE PRINCESS' FAULT.
WHO ASKED HER TO STAND UP FOR THOSE STUPID PEASANTS?

I DON'T EVEN NEED ZHOU YU TO ORDER ME DIRECTLY...
I'LL MAKE THE DRAGON'S SON GROUP JOIN MY DOLL COLLECTION.


NEXT DAY
YES, PRINCESS!
KEEP A LOOKOUT FOR ANY SHAN YUE AMBUSH
I CAN FINALLY GET A TASTE OF ♡ COMBAT!
GOOD!
MU FU MOUNTAIN!
SO THAT IS...

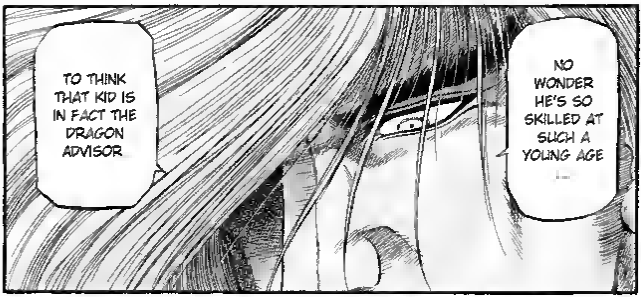
WHAT IS SHE THINKING?
COME OUT AND PLAY! ♡
YOU SHAN YUE BASTARDS WHERE ARE YOU?
SHOULD THE NEED ARISE, I'LL LOOK AFTER HER.
DON'T YOU WORRY, SHIRO!
EACH ONE OF THEM IS MORE SKILLED THAN THE "TIGER TROOPS"!
THOSE SHAN YUE TROOPS THAT FOUGHT ME!—
I WISH YOU COULD
STAND GUARD, HUH?
HUH?

SORRY, I JUST DIDN'T HAVE A CHANCE TO
オイコラ
WHY HAVEN'T YOU TOLD ME BEFORE?
WHA...
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
THE SHAN YUE TURN OUT TO BE QUITE THE CHALLENGE...
UH...
THE MORE I FIGHT AND THE MORE I LOOSE MYSELF...
THIS FEELING HAS BEEN HAUNTING MY HEART FOR A WHILE NOW...
...
I STILL HAVE MIXED FEELINGS ABOUT CROSSING SWORDS WITH THEM
I'M SORRY, LIAN HUA...

I C/N'T BRING MYSELF TO BELIEVE HER WORDS
THOUGH YUE YIN SAID MASUMI AND I ARE THE SAME

PUNK !
SO YOU CAME

HA HA HA


NO WONDER HE'S SO SKILLED AT SUCH A YOUNG AGE
TO THINK THAT KID IS IN FACT THE DRAGON ADVISOR

BUT I COULDN'T CARE LESS ...
EVEN HE WON'T BE ABLE TO DEFEAT MY "EVIL SPIRIT EIGHT FORMATION" TACTIC.
END OF CHAPTER 45

HEY GUYS,

A NEW CHAPTER OF RYUUKRODEN IS RELEASED! JANKENPON'S STILL SEARCHING FOR STAR OCEAN TRANSLATORS AND RYUUKRODEN PROOFREADERS SO EMAIL US AT JOIN@JANKENPON.DE IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN HELPING OUT. SEE YA ALL AROUND!

- APEMAN

STAFF:
- RAWS: RAVENOUSREADER
- TRANSLATION: SANDOITCH!
- PROOFREADER: SHIMMY
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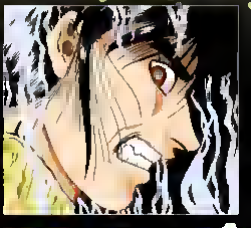
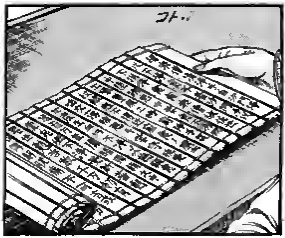
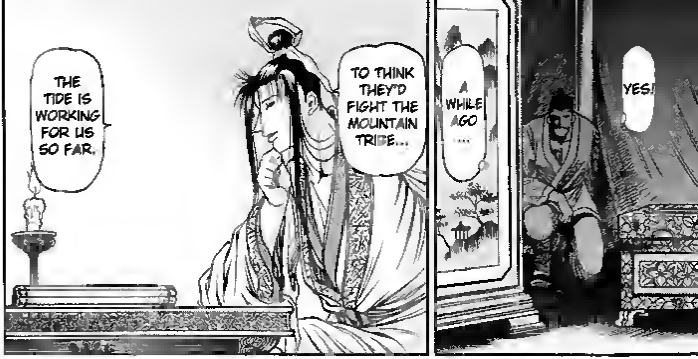


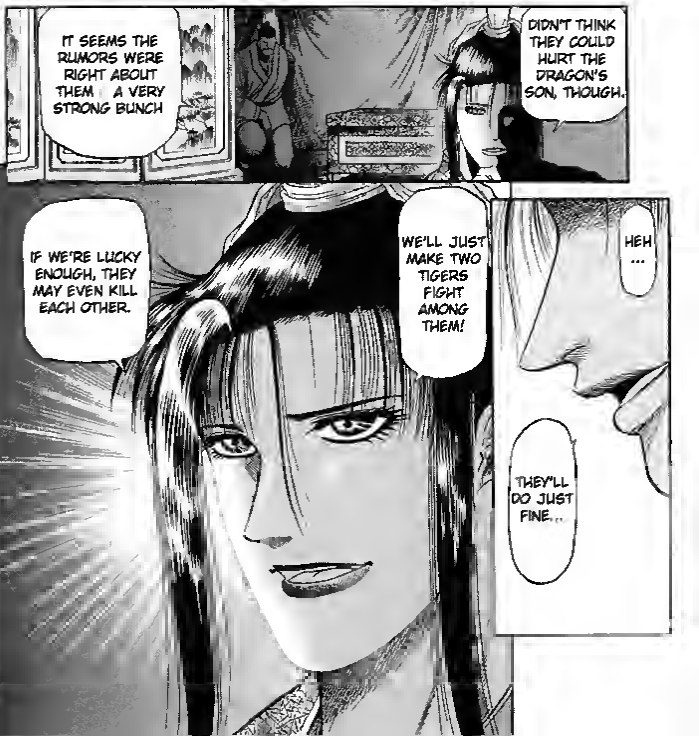
CHAPTER 46:
THE FORTRESS OF THE EIGHT SPIRITS

LU KOU, WU'S SHORE

THAT DRAGON'S SON HAS ENTERED THE FOREST?
SO



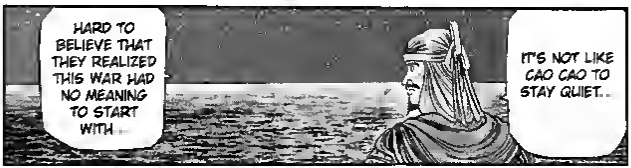

THE TIDE IS WORKING FOR US SO FAR.
TO THINK THEY'D FIGHT THE MOUNTAIN TRIBE...
A WHILE AGO ...
YES!

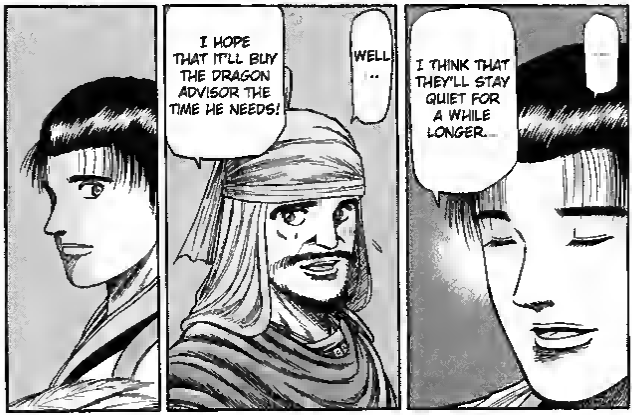

IT SEEMS THE RUMORS WERE RIGHT ABOUT THEM A VERY STRONG BUNCH
DIDN'T THINK THEY COULD HURT THE DRAGON'S SON, THOUGH.
IF WE'RE LUCKY ENOUGH, THEY MAY EVEN KILL EACH OTHER.
WE'LL JUST MAKE TWO TIGERS FIGHT AMONG THEM!
HEH ...
THEY'LL DO JUST FINE...

A PROPER BAIT IS NEEDED..
THE DRAGON'S SON MUSTN'T GET OUT OF THERE ALIVE!
I SUPPOSE A GROUP OF SPIES COULD INFILTRATE THEM AND ELIMINATE HIM MUCH FASTER...
BUT IT CAN'T BE DONE AS LONG AS THE PRINCESS REN IS PRESENT
THAT NAIVE LITTLE GIRL IS IMPULSIVE...
KONG MING SURE HAS MORE THAN A TRICK UP HIS SLEEVE!
MAKE SURE THAT NO HARM COMES TO HER, EVEN IF IT MEANS CANCELLING OUR PLANS.
THAT WAS QUICK THINKING FROM HIS SIDE, SENDING A SHIELD FOR HIS DRAGON FRIEND...

DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME, ROSHOKU.
DO YOU FEEL COLD, MASTER?

ヒュウ

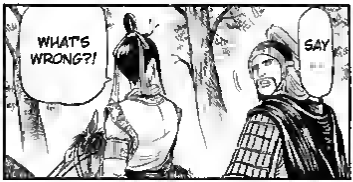

HARD TO BELIEVE THAT THEY REALIZED THIS WAR HAD NO MEANING TO START WITH...
IT'S NOT LIKE CAO CAO TO STAY QUIET...


I HOPE THAT IT'LL BUY THE DRAGON ADVISOR THE TIME HE NEEDS!
WELL...
I THINK THAT THEY'LL STAY QUIET FOR A WHILE LONGER...

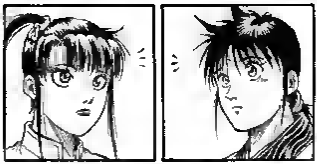
DON'T WORRY ...
I'M QUITE SURE THAT IT WILL!
BACK TO THE FOREST ...

IT CAN'T BE HELPED, THIS IS THE ONLY WAY TO THE MOUNTAINS .
WE'RE LOOSING TRACK OF OUR ROUTE!

IS THERE NO END TO THIS FOREST?
AW ...


WHAT'S WRONG?!
SAY ..

...
...



WHY?

MAY I ASK THAT YOU RETURN TO THE CASTLE, PRINCESS?
WITH ALL DUE RESPECT ...

FOR THREE TIMES WERE TROOPS SENT AND NO ONE EVER CAME BACK ALIVE.
THREE TIMES!
THIS ISN'T THE FIRST TIME THAT TROOPS WERE SENT TO THIS PLACE...
NO ONE MADE IT BACK?
HUH ?!
!
VANISHED INTO THIN AIR! AS IF THIS FOREST HAD EATEN THEM!
HAS ..
ANY SOLDIER THAT ENTERED THIS FOREST...
NO!

WHAT?
EATEN BY THE FOREST?

A MAN EATING FOREST ?!
YES!
YOU SEE ...
WE NEVER GOT TO THE TRIBE ...
BECAUSE OF THIS THICK FOREST...
I SENT SOLDIERS ON THE FOOTPATH THREE TIMES ...
I ASKED THEM TO FIND A CAMP OF SOME SORT, A LEAD FOR OUR ATTACK
THE FOREST SURROUNDS THE ENTIRE MOUNTAIN.
AND TO TOP IT ALL, EVEN LOCAL VILLAGERS HAVE A HARD TIME FINDING THE EXIT

EVEN THE TROOPS THAT I ASSIGNED TO FIND THE LOST TROOPS NEVER MADE IT BACK!
BUT NOT A SINGLE ONE EVER RETURNED ...
BUT ISN'T IT STRANGE THAT NOT A SINGLE ONE EVER RETURNED?
MAYBE THEY WERE ATTACKED
FOOT PATH ...
LOST ...
WIDE AND THICK FOREST ...
BUT THERE IS A FOOTPATH, THEY CAN'T GET LOST!
IT MAY BE THICK ...
!

NOW I SEE...
THIS IS THE WORK OF THE PHOENIX!
SAY...
HM?
COULD YOU PLEASE LEND ME
YOUR FASTEST HORSE?
HUH?

ISN'T IT TOO RISKY FOR YOU TO FOLLOW THEM ALONE?
MY LADY...
DON'T WORRY! THEY WONT GET KILLED SO EASILY!
THE DRAGON ADVISOR IS WITH THEM, ISN'T HE?
HE HAS ALREADY FELL INTO THE TRAP OF OUR ENEMY!
I THINK THAT RIGHT ABOUT NOW...
NO...

AH!
EXCUSE ME!
EH?
!!!
FELL FOR THAT TRAP TOO?!
SO THE DRAGON ...
IT SEEMS THAT GENERAL ZHAO'S PLAN IS GOING AS PLANNED!
HEH!

I MUST TELL SHIRO ABOUT THE TRAP IN THAT MOUNTAIN!
IF ONLY I HAD NEWS OF THIS SOONER!
OF THE EIGHT SPIRITS FORTRESS!
THE TRAP ...
EEI

WHAT?!
HUH?
AH!
UH!

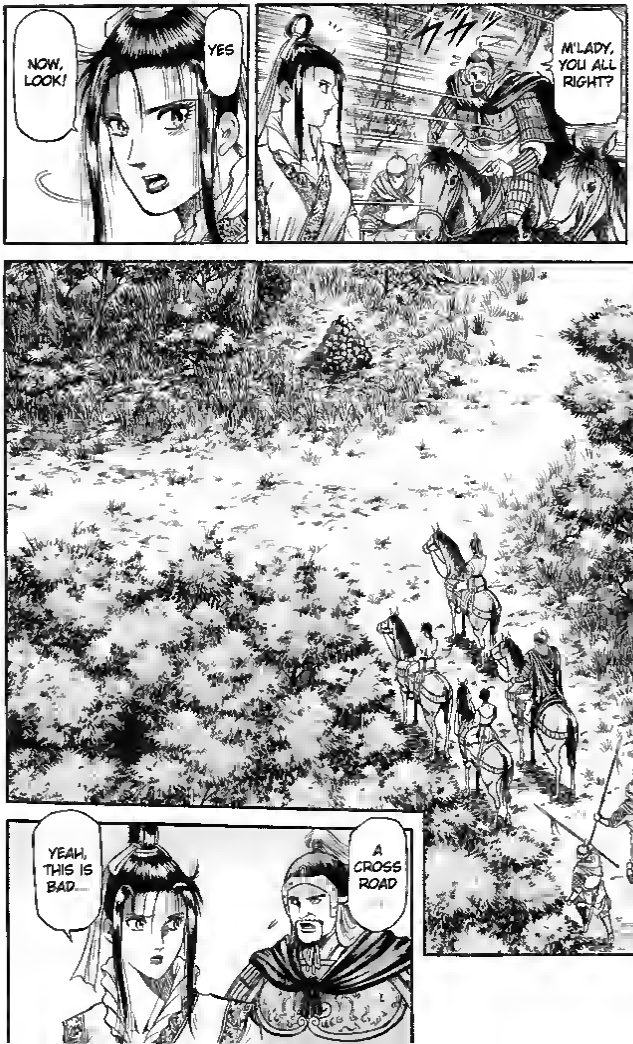
HA HA

ARG!
UH!
SOLDIERS WITH SHIELDS AND BOWS, GO TO THE FRONT AND ATTACK!
EVERYONE, DUCK!
SIR!

STOP! GO BACK!
HO!
UH!
HEY!
THEY'RE RUNNING AWAY!
DAMN IT!
LIKE I'D LET YOU ESCAPE!
YEAH RIGHT!
WHAT ?!
OH!

WHAT A PAIN IN THE ASS!
WE MUST FOLLOW HER, LIEN HUA!
NO, WAIT!
NOT ALONE! PLEASE COME BACK!
PROTECT HER AT ALL COSTS!
ALL TROOPS, MOVE!
SHE MAY BE A PRINCESS BUT SHE'S STILL NOTHING MORE THAN A WOMAN WITH NO KNOWLEDGE OF WAR
BUNCH OF FOOLS, THEY FELL FOR IT!
HA!

LOST THEM!
DAMN!
THEY GOT AWAY! WE LOST THEM!
YOU'RE LATE!
WAIT!
BEFORE YOU EVEN GOT THE CHANCE TO FIGHT THEM
I'D HAVE DROPPED ABOUT 4 OR 5 OF THEM...
WHAT IF IT WAS A TRAP? WHAT COULD YOU HAVE DONE BY YOURSELF?
ENOUGH !!!
WHAT A PAIN IN THE ASS...!
HH... !


NOW, LOOK!
YES
M'LADY, YOU ALL RIGHT?
YEAH, THIS IS BAD...
A CROSS ROAD

HM?
WENT ON THE PATH THAT LEADS TO THE LEFT.
THEIR HORSES
NEED A MARKER TO FIND THEIR WAY IN THIS FOREST.
SEEMS THAT EVEN THEY
WHAT'S THIS?
WHY A MARKER ?!
WE NEED TO GIVE CHASE! NOW!
LEAVE THOSE BE!

WE SHOULDN'T GIVE CHASE JUST YET!
THEY'RE OBVIOUSLY MOVING TO LURE US INTO A TRAP.
HUH ?!
PRINCESS, WAIT A MINUTE!
IF WE DON'T, WE'LL NEVER KNOW WHERE THEIR HEADQUARTERS ARE LOCATED!
ARE YOU A COWARD, DRAGON'S SON?
A DISADVANTAGE IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TERRAIN, WE STILL MUST HAVE OUR REVENGE TODAY!
EVEN THOUGH WE HAVE ...
THAT MEANS WE HAVE THEM OUTNUMBERED!
ALSO, IF THEY NEED TO USE TRICKS ...
YES, IT MAY BE SO
HM ...

YES, WE DO!
DON'T WE EVERYONE ?!
HM?
MY LADY!
SHUT UP!
THE GUARD OF THAT PRISON?
HEY, AREN'T YOU...
WE'D FEEL HONORED IF MY LADY WERE TO LEAD US!
YOUR WORDS REFLECT ALL OF OUR FEELINGS
I BEG YOUR FORGIVENESS FOR THAT DAY, I WASN'T MYSELF..
YES! MY NAME IS SHEN PIN.

ALL OF US SOLDIERS HAD THEIR FAMILIES KILLED BY THEM.
YES

DO YOU REALLY WANT TO AVENGE YOUR BIG BROTHER?
DON'T WORRY

WE'LL GIVE OUR LIVES AWAY TO SLAY THEM, MY LADY!
WE WANT SOME PAYBACK!
THAT'S RIGHT!

BUT WE WON'T BE ABLE TO STOP THEM NOW ANYWAY..
NO!

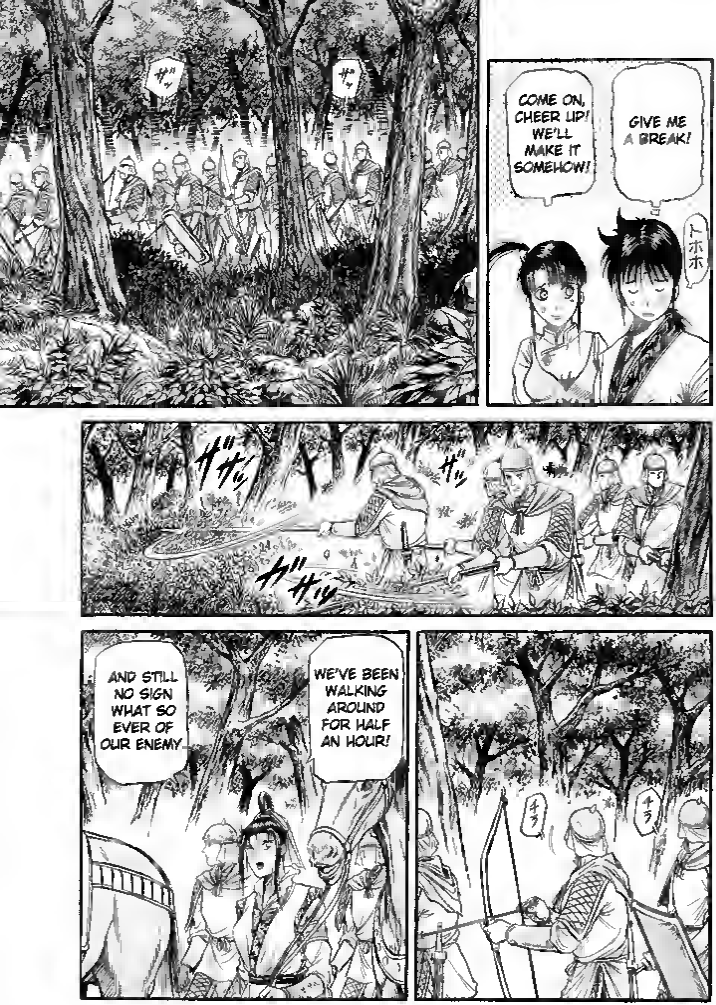
SHIRO, IS THIS OK?
ｳﾝ。
?!

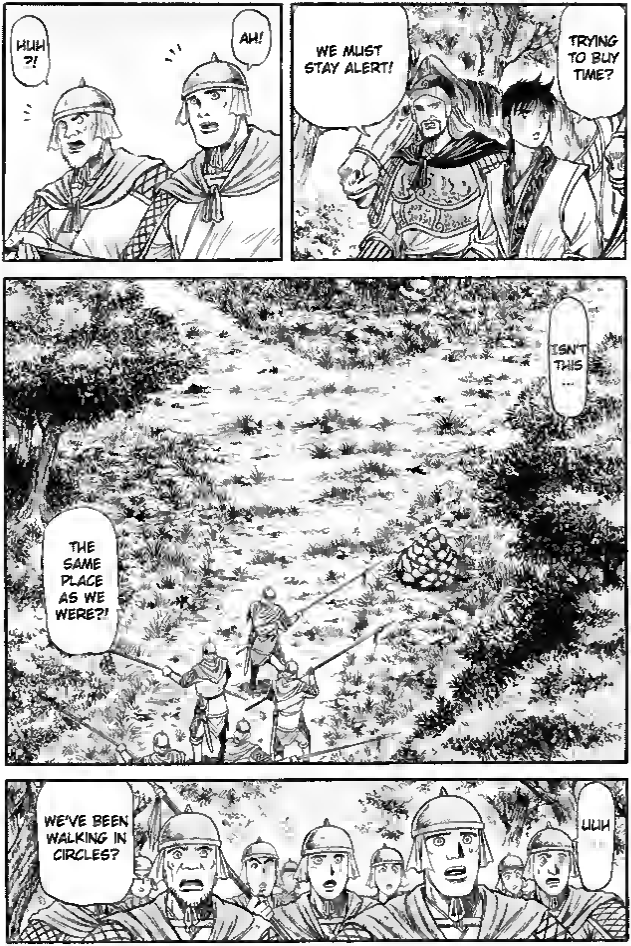
YOU

WE'LL GET YOUR REVENGE FOR SURE!
YES!

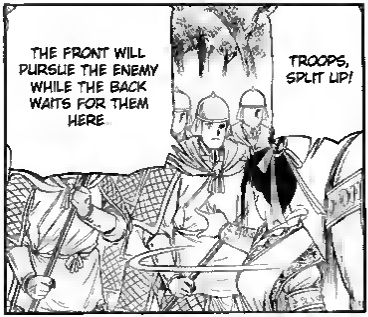
WHAT A CHANGE, THOUGH ...
THAT ONCE SELFISH PRINCESS ACTUALLY HEARD SOMEONE'S CALL FOR HELP AND ANSWERED IT .
LIAN HUA!
WE'LL WALK FROM HERE!
HUH ?!
YEAH, GUESS SO...
YOU GUYS SHOULD DO THE SAME.
!
SPEARMEN, PLEASE MAKE A GROUP OF 4 TO 5 PEOPLE
AND LEAD UP FRONT. AS YOU WALK, PLEASE CHECK IF OUR ENEMIES ARE HIDING IN THE BUSHES.
COME ON!
YOU'LL BE SITTING DUCKS FOR THEIR ARROWS IF YOU STAY UP THERE!

GENERAL, PLEASE INFORM THE SOLDIER IN THE BACK
SOLDIERS WITH SHIELDS, PLEASE PROTACT THE ARCHERS AT ALL TIMES
ARCHERS, LINE UP AND PROTECT THE SIDES.
HUM. SAY
I SHALL DO AS YOU SAY, DRAGON ADVISOR
YES!
THIS IS STILL A CRAZY IDEA! WE NEED TO BE CAREFUL!
SO WE NEED TO PREPARE OURSELVES FOR THE WORSE.
WE'LL ADVANCE FORWARD, WON'T WE?
I'M DEPENDING ON YOU, "DRAGON ADVISOR."
I SEE ..


ガヤ
ガヤ
COME ON, CHEER UP! WE'LL MAKE IT SOMEHOW!
GIVE ME A BREAK!
トホホ
ガヤガヤ
ガヤガヤ
AND STILL NO SIGN WHAT SO EVER OF OUR ENEMY
WE'VE BEEN WALKING AROUND FOR HALF AN HOUR!
ヒラ
ヒラ

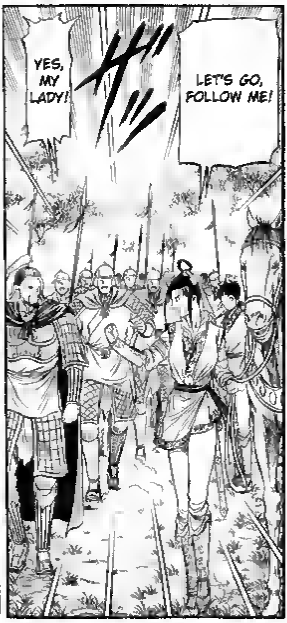

HUH?!
AH!
WE MUST STAY ALERT!
TRYING TO BUY TIME?
ISN'T THIS ...
THE SAME PLACE AS WE WERE?!
WE'VE BEEN WALKING IN CIRCLES?
HUH

THIS MUST BE THE SAME PLACE, WE CIRCLED ROUND...
THE HORSES' FOOTSTEPS HERE ARE STILL GOING LEFTWARDS!
I DON'T GET IT MYSELF, BUT...
WHAT IN HELL?
NO, SIR! NOTHING!
WAS THERE ANOTHER PATH ON OUR WAY?
HEY!
HUM...
BUT WHY ?!
BIG CIRCLE
IF THERE ISN'T ANY OTHER CROSS ROADS
ATTACK
THAT MEANS OUR ENEMY RETURNED TO THE PLACE OF OUR FIRST ENCOUNTER
THERE'S A BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS.
I DON'T HAVE A CLUE...


THE FRONT WILL PURSUE THE ENEMY WHILE THE BACK WAITS FOR THEM HERE
TROOPS, SPLIT UP!

THERE IS NO PLAN!
THE ENEMY IS JUST TRYING TO CONFUSE US, THAT'S ALL!

YES?
UHM...


YES, MY LADY!
LET'S GO, FOLLOW ME!

BUT WHAT IF THAT WAS THEIR GOAL ALL ALONG?
IF WE COULD AMBUSH THE RETREATING ENEMY, WE'D WIN THIS BATTLE...

TO DIVIDE US?!
!

PERHAPS THEY WANT OUR PARTY TO SPLIT UP
SO THAT THEY CAN ATTACK US ONE BY ONE.

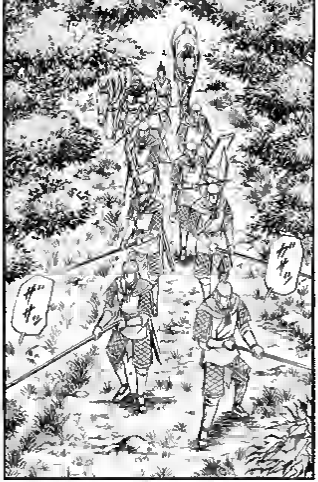
TELL ME
YES?

AND IF THEY DO ATTACK
THEY'LL MOST PROBABLY ATTACK THE FRONT BECAUSE THAT'S WHERE THE COMMANDER IS

PLEASE TELL THE SOLDIERS IN THE BACK TO FOLLOW
THEY SHOULD KEEP A MODERATE DISTANCE LET'S SET A TRAP FOR OUR HOSTS
YES
I'LL PASS THE ORDER ALONG THE REST OF THE TROOPS!

FRONT
SPLIT
BACK
BUT ...
WHAT COULD THEY POSSIBLY BE THINKING?!

WE'RE JUST CIRCLING AROUND!
WHERE IS THE ENEMY?



HUH ?!
OH!

THERE WERE NO DEAD ENDS HERE BEFORE!
HUH ?!

THE ROAD
IT'S GONE!

THERE'S ONLY ONE ROAD, IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO MAKE THAT MISTAKE!
NO WAY!!
MAYBE YOU TOOK THE WRONG ROAD?
YOU GUYS IN FRONT...
WE'VE FALLEN FOR THEIR TRAP!
SHIRO?
WHAT NOW?!

AH!
F*
THEY WERE HIDING UNDER GROUND!
HEY!
IS BAD! THEY GOT US!
THIS
DAMN YOU, YOU SNEAKY BASTARDS!
ARG!

HEY!
AH!
AH!
DON'T LET YOUR GUARD DOWN, LIAN HUA!
BUT...
THE PRESSURE IS OVER-WHELMING

UWOOH!
THEY SPLIT THE TROOPS?
IS WU COMING FROM THE BACK?
WHAT?!
HUH?!
AH!
OH MY... A SPLIT ATTACK?
DRAGON BOY IS QUITE A CLEVER ONE!

AH!
NO!
COME BACK HERE ...!
DAMN! TRAPS!
AH!
URG!
HOLD IT!
THERE MIGHT BE MORE TRAPS IN THERE!
UH!
THOSE LOW LIVES!
WERE THEY AIMING FOR THE HORSES?

IF WE CHARGE HEAD ON, WE'LL ONLY FALL INTO MORE TRAPS!
FROM THE LOOKS OF THINGS, THIS IS THEIR TURF!
IT'S ABOUT TIME WE WENT BACK TO THE CASTLE!
HEY!
!
WHAT ABOUT THOSE SOLDIERS?
SAY WHAT?!
PERHAPS IT'S ALREADY TOO LATE FOR US TO TURN BACK...
DAMN THIS...
EVERYONE FALL BACK! WE'RE GOING HOME!
OI!
IF WE DON'T RETREAT NOW, THE DEATH TOLL MIGHT INCREASE.
I THINK SO TOO, PRINCESS.
FINE...
..

IT'S TOO LATE...
...
YOU WON'T COME OUT OF THIS ALIVE!
WE CAME THIS WAY BEFORE...
IF MY MEMORY SERVES...
OH!
!!
!!

THEY WANT TO MAKE US WALK WHICH MEANS THEY HAVE EVERY INTENTION TO ATTACK US AGAIN
I'M PRETTY SURE THAT LAST ATTACK WAS AIMED AT THE HORSES
THIS IS BAD ...

THEY HAVE A CLEAR ADVANTAGE SO WHY GO THROUGH ALL THAT TROUBLE?
BUT WHY GO THAT FAR? THEY COULD JUST ATTACK US WITH ALL THEIR SOLDIERS

NO WAY ...
WE'RE BACK AT THIS PLACE AGAIN?!

IS THERE NO END TO THIS FOREST?
WE'VE BEEN WALKING FOR HOURS

WAIT, DON'T TELL ME THAT'S ...
!

DID WE TAKE THE WRONG ROAD?
HOW COULD THIS BE?!
WE WALKED FOR HOURS AND STILL CAME BACK HERE?!
BUT... HOW?
THE WAY OUT
THE WAY IN
CROSS ROAD
NO, IF WE TAKE IT THAT THE ROAD TURNS IN CIRCLES THAN WE SHOULD HAVE BEEN OUT OF HERE A LONG TIME AGO!
DID WE FALL INTO SOME TRAP OF THEIRS?!
...
HOW DID THIS HAPPEN ...?
LET'S GO BACK AND CHECK THE ROAD FOR OTHER PATHS THAT WE COULD TAKE
WELL ...

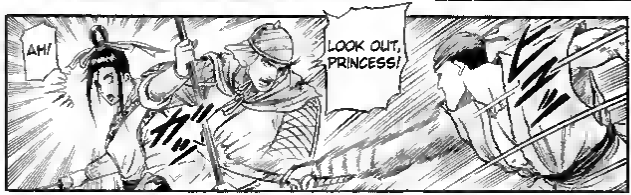
ズキ…
UH…
UH…
UH…
THIS ARMOR FEELS HEAVY…
WILL THIS FOREST EVER END?
NO!
THIS CAN'T BE…
NO…

I CAN'T WALK...
NO!
MY GOD!
NOT AGAIN!
HOW DO WE KEEP CIRCLING AROUND?!
BUT HOW?
WE HAVE FAILED
WE'LL DIE!
THIS MUST BE SOME KIND OF MAGIC!
HOW?
WE CAN'T WIN AGAINST MAGIC!
NOBODY EVER MADE IT OUT OF HERE...
IT'S NO USE, NO MATTER HOW FAR WE WALK

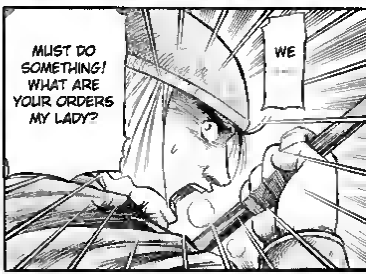
THEY LOST ALL WILL TO CARRY ON!
THE FATIGUE IS GETTING TO THEIR BRAINS!
UH!
WHAT MAGIC?
WHAT HAPPENED TO THE COURAGE YOU SHOWED ME EARLIER?
!!

NO!
LOOK OUT!
THEY WERE TRYING TO WEAR US DOWN ALL ALONG!
UG!
NOT NOW!
WE'RE GONNA DIE!
UH!
AAH!
ARG!

THEY'VE LOST THEIR WILL TO FIGHT, IT'S USELESS!
LEAVE THEM BE!
DON'T FALTER! FIGHT BACK!
HEY!


AH!
LOOK OUT, PRINCESS!

IT WASN'T SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN THIS WAY. HOW DID IT GET DOWN TO THIS?!
YES, WE MUST DO SOMETHING BUT WHAT?


WE MUST DO SOMETHING! WHAT ARE YOUR ORDERS MY LADY?

IS THEIR BOSS? GOOD TO KNOW...
THAT LITTLE GIRLY ...
!
THE ONLY ONES HIDING.
YOU ARE NOT
THE DRAGON'S SON CAN'T HOLD ALL OF THEM BACK, IT SEEMS US ASSASSINS WILL HAVE TO PROTECT HER AFTER ALL.
QUITE THE SNEAKY BUNCH.

JUST THINK, WOULD YOU?!
WE CAN'T WIN AGAINST MAGIC!
AH!
WE OUTNUMBER THEM! BRACE YOURSELVES AND FIGHT, WE CAN WIN THIS!
IF THEY COULD USE MAGIC, THEY WOULDN'T NEED THEIR SWORDS!
OH!
WE DO?!
CAN WE?

I SALUTE YOUR EFFORTS TO REMOVE THE EFFECT OF OUR TACTICS!
BUT WE CAN'T AFFORD TO HAVE YOU DO THAT... IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO DIE...
HIM AGAIN...
ARG!
!
THEY WON'T HOLD MUCH LONGER
I MUST END THIS AS FAST AS I CAN!

I WON'T ALLOW IT TO HAPPEN AGAIN... THAT BLOODY TRAGEDY!
THERE'S WON'T BE ANY PLACE FOR HESITATION THIS TIME!
WHAT'S WITH THIS FEELING?
!

!!
DIE!
DON'T!

UG!
AK!

HE'S NOT GOING TO HOLD BACK ANYMORE. .
IT'S NOT LIKE HIM!
WHAT WAS THAT?
WITH ONE HIT, ALL THE SOLDIERS STOPPED FIGHTING ..
IMPRESSIVE!
?
I SHALL ENJOY THIS FIGHT TO THE FULLEST!
YOU, A DRAGON ARE A WORTHY OPPONENT!

ドン
HAA!
ス…
ズン
!
ア!

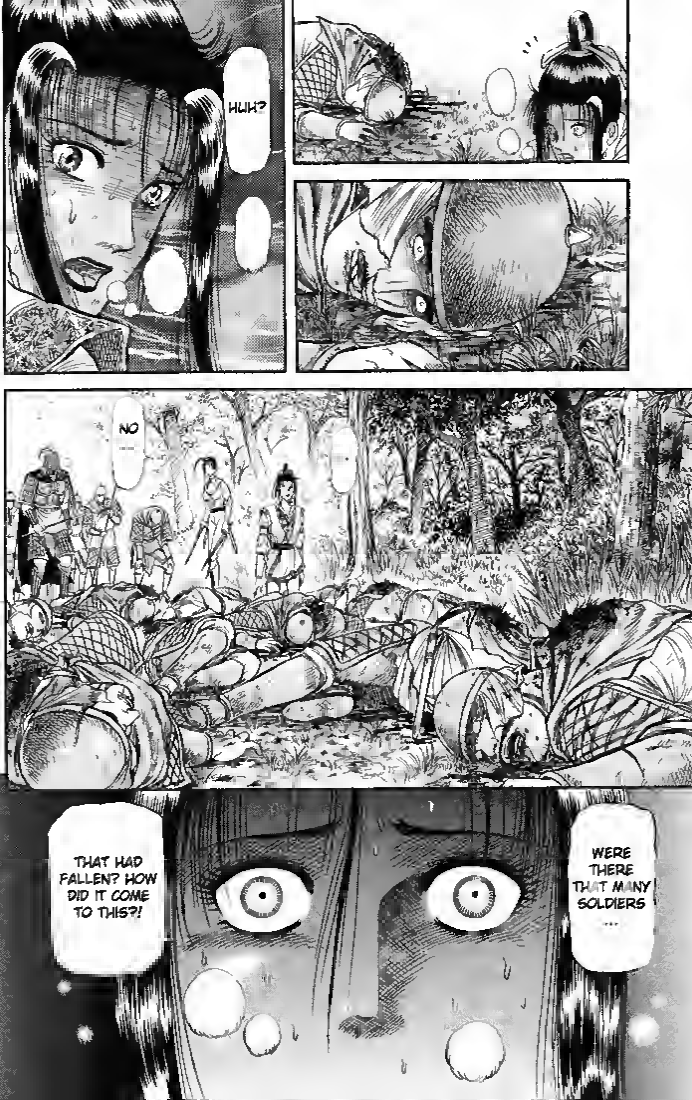
DIDN'T YOU LEARN ANYTHING? HURRY UP AND DIE!
GOING FOR THE SAME BLOCK?
WAVE SPLITTING MOUNTAIN TECHNIQUE!

WHEN DID HE REALIZE?
HE LET GO OF THE SWORD?
!!
DID HE REALIZE THAT AND MADE IT SO THAT HE'D LET GO AT THE LAST MOMENT?!
AT THE MOMENT OF THE CLASH, THE VIBRATIONS ARE THE KEY!

HE WANTED ME TO START WITH THIS ATTACK SO THAT HE COULD USE HIS COUNTER!
DAMN, HE WAS PROVOKING ME FROM THE START!

UH!
OH!
WHAT?
GO!
RETREAT!
AH!

WE, I WE MADE IT!
AH —
IS THIS ...
WHAT THEY CALL WAR?


HUH?
!!!
NO
WERE THERE THAT MANY SOLDIERS ...
THAT HAD FALLEN? HOW DID IT COME TO THIS?!

I FAILED THEM...
IF ONLY I DIDN'T GIVE CHASE. I SHOULD HAVE KEPT OUT OF THIS FOREST ...
MY LADY ...
...
WE MUST GET OUT OF THIS FOREST AS SOON AS WE CAN...
BEFORE THAT MORE SOLDIERS DIE...
WE
DON'T HAVE TIME FOR REGRETS!
OH!
...

HE'S HAD HIS FAIR SHARE OF BATTLES AND LOSSES
THAT'S RIGHT, THE DRAGON'S SON MUST HAVE EXPERIENCED SUCH A SITUATION BEFORE..
PEOPLE THAT FOLLOWED HIM... PEOPLE THAT BELIEVED IN HIM...
HE MUST HAVE SEEN LOTS OF PEOPLE DIE..
HM? ...
LET'S FOCUS ON GETTING OUT OF HERE ALIVE...
FOR NOW...
SAY ...
THEY WON'T ATTACK US BEFORE THAT THEY MAKE SURE HE'S ALRIGHT...
THEY TOOK THEIR MASTER TO THEIR BASE FOR SOME HEALING...

SHIRO!
THIS VOICE..
IS IT YOU, MISS YUEH YING?
YOUR VOICED REACHED ME..
THAT MEANS YOU'RE CLOSE, RIGHT?
YES!
ARE YOU SAFE?
YES..

!!
I AM ...
STANDING NEXT TO A PILE OF ROCKS...
WHAT?
BUT SO ARE WE! WHAT IN...
DON'T WORRY...
THIS IS AN OLD TRICK!
IT'S CALLED THE..
FORTRESS OF THE EIGHT DEVILS, A TRICK TO CONFUSE THE ENEMY.

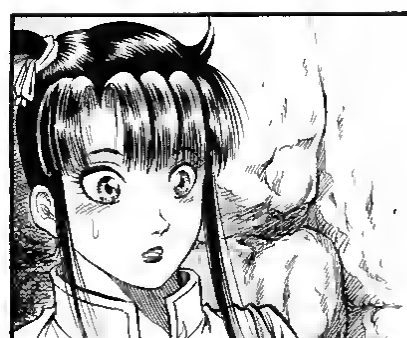
I SEE ...
COULD IT BE SOME KIND OF LABYRINTH?
THIS "TACTIC" IS USED TO TIRE OUT THE ENEMY AND CONFUSE HIM TO THE POINT WHERE VICTORY CAN EASILY BE ACHIEVED...
THE SAME PILE OF ROCK IS POSTED AT 8 DIFFERENT LOCATIONS...
RIGHT NOW ...
THERE IS NO OTHER WAY BUT TO FOLLOW MY VOICE ON THE WAY BACK
THE OLD TRICKS ONE WOULD USE TO GET OUT OF A LABYRINTH WON'T WORK HERE
IT IS AND IT IS NOT
HOW DO WE GET OUT OF HERE?
WHAT ?!

DID HE GET THE TRICK BEHIND THIS MAGIC?
NOW HE LEADS US SO EASILY ...
IT'S THE ONLY THING THAT'LL GET US OUT OF HERE ALIVE.
WE NEED THE POWER OF THE DRAGON.
...
YES ...
KEEP WALKING
THIS WAY ...
THIS WAY ...
SHIRO ...

IT'S HARD TO KEEP RADIATING IT LIKE THAT!
EASY FOR YOU TO SAY ....
THE WAVES OF YOUR AURA KEEP GETTING CLOSER!
YOUR AURA ....
?!

HER VOICE ...
IT'S... GONE!
HEY!
NO!
I CAN'T FEEL HER ANYMORE!

NO, WAIT!
AH!
THIS CAN'T BE!
THIS MUST ...
MEAN THAT THEY ATTACKED YUEH YING AS WELL!
TO BE CONTINUED IN VOLUME 13



HEY GUYS,

A NEW CHAPTER OF RYUURODEN IS RELEASED! JANKENPON'S STILL SEARCHING FOR STAR OCEAN TRANSLATORS AND RYUURODEN PROOFREADERS SO EMAIL US AT JOIN@JANKENPON.DE IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN HELPING OUT. SEE YA ALL AROUND!

- APEMAN

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